

# TATTVALOKA

Journal of Vedanta

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# TATTVALOKA

(Journal of Vedanta)

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तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

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# TATTVALOKA



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## PRAYER

### आनन्दलहरी

(continued from the previous issue)

हिमाद्रेः संभूता सुललितकरैः पल्लवयुता  
सुपुष्पामुक्ताभिर्भ्रमरकलिता चालकभरैः ।  
कृतस्थाणुस्थानाकुचफलनता सूक्तिसरसा  
रुजां हन्त्री गन्त्री विलसति चिदानन्दलतिका ॥ ६ ॥

Born of the Himavat mountain ; with arms which are tender like leaf-shoots ; wearing pearls which are like flowers ; with forelocks like a cluster of bees ; clinging to Siva ; bent with the fruit-weight of Her breasts ; of charming speech ; destroyer of disease ; she shines like a spreading tendril of the bliss of knowledge.

The Divine Mother is here compared to a tender creeper, supported by Siva (who is statuesque like a pillar), of which the flowers are the pearls she wears, the fruits are her breasts, her forelocks are clustering dark bees. But she is not an ordinary dry creeper, but is full of juices that destroy disease. What is this disease ? It is the unending cycle of birth and death—Samsara. She spreads the true knowledge of “Chit” or undying and blissful consciousness everywhere like an enveloping creeper. One does not have to seek it. She offers it to us for it is spread everywhere.

सपर्णामाकीर्णा कतिपयगुणैः सादरमिह  
श्रयन्त्यन्ये वल्लीं मम तु मतिरेवं विलसति ।  
अपर्णैका सेव्या जगति सकलैर्यत्परिवृतः  
पुराणोपि स्थाणुः फलति किल कैवल्यपदवीम् ॥ ७ ॥

Some seek refuge in creepers which are full of leaves and which possess (no doubt) certain (good) qualities. To my mind (however) it seems that she (alone) is worship-worthy in this world, who being (a creeper) without leaves, (still) clinging to an ancient wood makes it yield the fruits of salvation.



The analogy of the creeper is carried further in this verse. There is no doubt that other creepers, full of leaves, have certain medicinal properties. So people resort to them. But the Divine Mother is a leafless creeper. She clings to the Lord Siva. Siva is here called “स्थानु” which also means a dry-wooden trunk. Yet, such is Her greatness, she makes this dry wood yield fruit. And the fruit is salvation.

The word “Kaivalya” has much philosophical significance. It is “attributeless soleness”, the residual deposit of the substance without attributes.\* Or it may mean the fifth constituent of salvation, the other four being Sālōkya, Sāmīpya, Sārūpya and Sāyujya. Sālōkya is the attainment of the same world as God. Sāmīpya is permanent proximity to Him. Sārūpya is the possession of physical characteristics which are the same as God’s. Sāyujya is becoming one with the Deity.

These four states are called ‘Pada’ because of their external fixity. They are the consummations of worship in which the God worshipped is differentiated from the worshipper.

But “Kaivalya” is the establishment in its own nature of the energy of consciousness.

कैवल्यं स्वरूपं प्रतिष्ठा चित्शक्तेः ।

There is no room for differentiation or attributes in this state of unconditioned bliss.

Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Mahaswamiji perhaps had this verse in mind when he wrote the following :

अपर्णवल्ली समाल्लेषयोगात्  
पुरास्थाणुतो योऽजनिष्ठामरार्थम् ।  
विशाखं नगे वल्लिकालिङ्गितं तं  
सदा षण्मुखं भावये हृत्सरोजे ॥

The Devi is the leafless creeper. Siva is the old timber. They gave birth to “Visakha” (the branchless) i.e., Lord

\*कैवल्यस्य भावो धर्मिमात्र विशेषः । कैवल्यं पञ्चमी मुक्तिः ॥

(Bhaskararaya, in his commentary on Lalitha Sahasranama 625)

कैवल्यपददायिनी



Subrahmanya, and gave him in marriage to Valli (creeper).  
Him, I contemplate in the lotus of my heart.

विधात्री धर्माणां त्वमसि सकलान्नायजननी  
त्वमर्थानां मूलं धनदनमनीयाङ्घ्रि कमले ।  
त्वमादिः कामानां जननि कृतकन्दर्पविजये  
सतां मुक्तेर्बीजं त्वमसि परब्रह्ममहिषी ॥ ८ ॥

The creator of all righteousness ; the source (or mother) of all the Vedas, art thou. O ! Thou whose two lotus feet are worshipped by the Lord of wealth, you are the source of all wealth ; O ! Conqueror of Cupid ! Thou art the root of all desires ; Mother, spouse of the ultimate Brahman ! Thou art the seed of the salvation of the saintly.

Reference is made here to the fact that she is the source of the four goals of life—Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mōksha.

This verse also indicates that the actual givers act on the power of Her presence, like the Vedas Dharma, Kubera wealth, Manmatha desire and the Brahman salvation.

She is given an ultimate and causal role.

प्रभूता भक्तिस्ते यदपि न ममालोलमनस-  
स्त्वया तु श्रीमत्या सदयमवलोक्योऽहमधुना ।  
पयोदः पानीयं दिशति मधुरं चातकमुखे  
भृशं शङ्के कैर्वा विधिभिरनुनीता मम मतिः ॥ ९ ॥

Although, because I am fickle-minded, I do not have unbounded devotion unto you, yet, I deserve to be looked at with compassion straightaway, by you who art the repository of opulence. The clouds pour sweet rain into the (upturned) mouth of the chataka bird. By which means will my mind come under control ? I am greatly frightened (when I think of it).

The “Chātaka” bird is said to keep its mouth open and upturned awaiting the rain. Although that bird does not have the power to command the clouds, yet, the cloud pours the rain into its mouth. But the bird is single-minded. I am not.



I know not the means either ; and I am frightened and pin my faith in your generosity.

कृपयापाङ्गालोकं वितर तरसा चारु चरिते  
न ते युक्तोपेक्षा मयि शरणदीक्षामुपगते ।  
न चेदिष्टं दद्यपादनुपदमहो कल्पलतिका  
विशेषः सामान्यैः कथमितरवल्ली परिकरैः ॥ १० ॥

O thou of auspicious life ! bestow unto me quickly the grace of thy side-long glance. It is not meet that you should be indifferent unto me who am fully committed to surrender unto you. If the wish-fulfilling creeper does not bestow immediately one's desires, how is it superior to the clusters of other creepers ?

#### A POSER

सन्तोषो यदि किं धनैः सुतशतैः किं यद्यनायत्तता  
वैराग्यं यदि किं कृतैः किमखिलैस्त्यागैर्विवेको यदि ।  
सत्सङ्गे यदि किं दिगन्तगमनप्रस्थानतीर्थाश्रमैः  
श्रीकान्ते यदि भक्तिरप्रतिहता तर्हि समाधिक्रमैः ॥

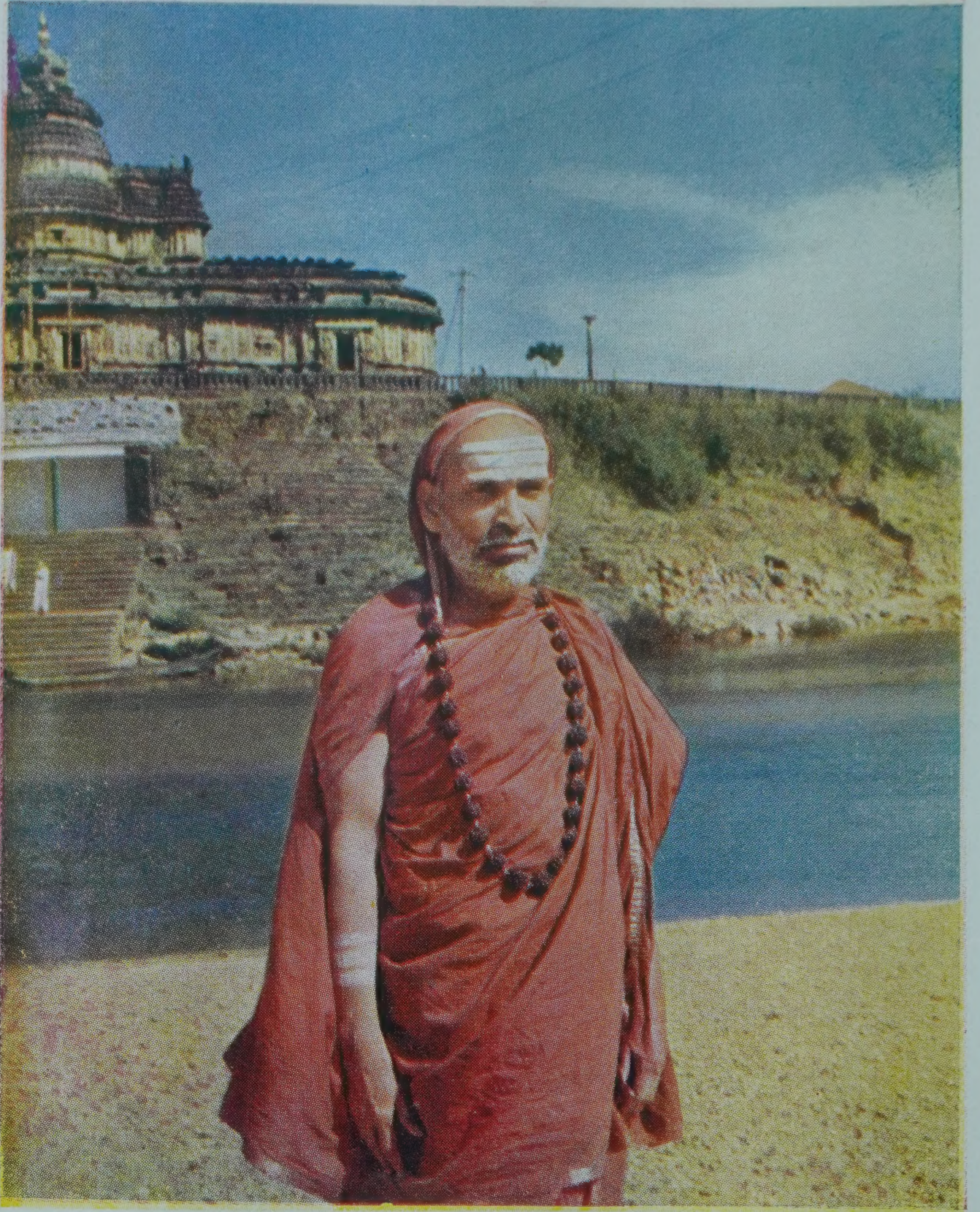
If contentment is there, what use is wealth ? If independence be there, why have a hundred sons ? If true dispassion be there, why the rituals and worship ? If discernment be there, what use are all the sacrifices ? If good company be there, why trouble yourself with pilgrimages to distant places ? If firm devotion be there in Vishnu why take to yogic practices ?







श्री श्री जगद्गुरु शङ्कराचार्य महासंस्थानम्, शारदापीठम्, शृङ्गेरी



श्री श्री जगद्गुरु अभिनवविद्यातीर्थ महास्वामिनः

Sri Sarada Seva Samiti  
Bombay



# श्रीजगद्गुरुपदपङ्कजषट्पदी

विद्यालङ्कारः सालग्राम कृष्ण रामचन्द्र राव

BY

Prof. S. K. RAMACHANDRA RAO

श्रियःकान्तं समालम्ब्य यः पुष्पात्यखिलान् श्रितान् ।

विद्यातीर्थमहं वन्देऽभिनवाद्यमहर्निशम्

॥ १ ॥

आस्मद्वाग्यपरीपाकाच्छारदापीठमुत्तमम् ।

अलङ्करोति परमोदारस्तं नमामि जगद्गुरुम्

॥ २ ॥

वन्दे ते वन्द्यमनिशं विद्यातीर्थमहेश्वरम् ।

शृङ्गाद्रौ राजते यश्च तुङ्गातीरतपोवने

॥ ३ ॥

विद्यातीर्थाभिनवनामानं विद्यादानाधिदैवतम् ।

मञ्चिन्तयामि सद्भक्त्या साक्षाच्छङ्कररूपिणम्

॥ ४ ॥

यः शङ्कर इव जगति स्वीयगरिम्णा जगद्गुरुर्जयति ।

व्यास इव स्वमहिम्ना जीयाद्भ्यश्चिराय गुरुराजः

॥ ५ ॥

को वास्ति शक्तस्तव सुप्रशस्तिम्

वक्तुं तथाप्यधुना कृतसाहसोऽहम् ।

याचे क्षमस्वेति गुरो मदीयान्

चापल्यभावेन कृतापराधान्

अर्पिता षट्पदी सैषा पदद्वन्द्वे महात्मनः ।

रचिता च मया भक्त्या प्रीणातु परमो गुरुः ॥

॥ ६ ॥



# श्रीहाचडुपतहाफासि

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ २ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ३ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ४ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ५ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ६ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ७ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ८ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ९ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १० ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ ११ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १२ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १३ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १४ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥

॥ १५ ॥ श्रीगणेशाय नमः ॥



# **SILVER JUBILEE OF THE PEETAROHANAM OF HIS HOLINESS SRI SRI ABHINAVA VIDYA- THEERTHA MAHASWAMIJI**

**( Jagadguru of Sree Sarada Peetam, Sringeri )**

His Holiness Sri Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Mahaswamiji, the present pontiff of Sri Sarada Peetam, Sringeri, was coronated on the 16th of October, 1954, as the thirtyfifth Sankaracharya, in an unbroken line of succession from Adi-Sankara Bhagavatpada. He completes twenty-five years of the Pontificate during this year.

During this period, he has by precept and example, sustained the spiritual greatness of the Peetam. The Sringeri Sarada Peetam is unique amongst the religious institutions of India. It was here that Sankara Bhagavatpada spent more than a third of his short but great life. It was here that he expounded his commentaries on the spiritual and philosophical Triad (Prasthanā Traya) to his worthy disciples. It was here that he installed the image of the Divine Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, the Goddess of knowledge, who to this day, presides over the throne of transcendental wisdom (Vyākhyāna Simhāsana) occupied with distinction by Her representatives, the gurus of Sringeri. It is the only image personally installed by the great acharya. Later, during the reign of Bharati Tirtha and Vidyaranya, it was here that Sāyana's commentaries on the Vedas were written. And within living memory, it was here that Sri Sivabhinava Satchidananda Narasimha Bharati and Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati demonstrated through their personal lives that Jivanmukti or the attainment of ultimate freedom from the cycle of birth and death is not a textual hope, but an attainable reality.

The Mahasannidhanam, as he is reverentially called by his disciples, is the worthy successor to this long line of preceptors, all of whom have been realised souls. We who have had the privilege of knowing him personally, have benefitted beyond measure by his counsel and instructions, indeed by his very presence. Under his reign, the Sringeri Math shines as a haven of spiritual refuge, and an illuminated edifice of advaita tradition.

Long may he live to benefit and bless us who are in dire need of a beacon-light to steer us across the agitated and troubled ocean of Samsāra, towards the other shore of self-realisation and bliss ever-lasting.



## HASTAMALAKA

During the course of his tours with his disciples, one day Sankara reached the town of Gokarna. There he worshipped Maheswara. He also composed a series of verses in praise of that deity. From there, he reached Hariharapuram where he worshipped God in the form of Sankaranarayana who was indicative of the non-duality of Siva and Vishnu, and consistently with this principle of non-duality, Sankara composed a series of verses with a double meaning applicable to Siva and Vishnu alike. Thereafter, he visited the great shrine of Mookambika. It was surrounded on all sides with forests of teak, mango, dates and bamboo and with a beautiful village nearby. Here also he praised Devi in a number of verses.

Having spent several days in Mookambika, Sankara with his disciples reached a village known as Sriballipuram. About 2000 Brahmins lived in that village, leading a life enjoined by the Vedas. There lived in that village a scholar by name Prabhākara who was deeply interested in the school of ritualism. He was a rich man but he had no peace of mind because his son was an idiot who never spoke a word and did not pay heed to what others said. He looked like one disinterested in everything and seemed always preoccupied. He was however very beautiful in appearance. His father was puzzled at the peculiar characteristics of his son, and when he came to know that the great Sankaracharya had come to his village, he took his son to him. Himself and his son prostrated before the saint and so inactive was the son, that having prostrated, he did not even get up. Sankara then held the hand of the boy and lifted him up. The boy stood with his head bent downwards. The father then explained his predicament to Sankara. Said the father, "he is now 13 years old but he is unintelligent and cannot read or write. He does not play with the other boys. If he mixes with them and is beaten by some of them, he never gets angry. Sometimes he eats and at other times, he does not. He never does what he is asked to do but acts according to his own wish." Hearing this Sankara asked the boy, "Who are you? Why do



you behave like an inanimate thing?" To these, the boy replied in 12 verses which contain the essence of the Advaita doctrine of the Soul and its relation to the Body on the one hand, and the Universe on the other. Sankara blessed the boy by touching him on the head. He told the father that the boy was not fit to remain with him (i.e., with the father) and that on account of the results of his Karma in the previous birth he was a realised soul. Sankara took him with him and departed. The boy became Sankara's disciple and was called Hastāmalaka because he had explained the central truth about the Soul and the Universe as clearly as a fruit in the palm of one's hand.\*

So great was the Acharya's regard for Hastamalaka's verses that he wrote a commentary on them. This is an unique instance of a preceptor writing a commentary on the works of his own disciple.

#### Parallel with the life of Jadabharata

There is a close parallel between the life of Hastāmalaka and that of 'Jadabharatha' as narrated in the Srimad Bhagavatam. (5th canto Chapter 7-14) King Bharata, after ruling over Bhārata Varsha, relinquished his earthly burden, and retired to the forest for meditation. While thus engaged, one day, as he was meditating on the Pranava by the side of the river, a female deer came to the bank of the river. As it was drinking the water from the river, it heard the roar of a lion and overcome by fear it jumped into the water, and was washed away. However, it delivered a deer-calf. Seeing the plight of the deer-calf, Bharata rescued it and brought it up like a child. So affectionate did he become towards it that all his time was spent in looking after it. When it was not in his presence he worried about it. Thus he forgot his spiritual penance. When the time came for him to die, his thoughts were of the deer. So he was born as a deer. Thus he illustrated the truth of the verse in the Bhagavadgita—

यं यं वापि स्मरन् भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।

तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥

---

\*Hastāmalaka Bhashyam is almost a Bhashyam on Sri Sankara's दशश्लोकी.



But he retained the knowledge of his previous birth, and so lived alone, without joining the herd and only looking forward to the decease of the deer-body. He was then born to a Brahmin. Remembering his past lives, he appeared to the world like one insane, idiot, deaf and dumb, always meditating on God.

तत्रापि स्वजनसङ्गाच्च भृशमुद्विजमानो भगवतः कर्म कर्मबन्धविध्वंसनश्रवण-  
स्मरणगुणविवरणचरणारविन्दं मनसातिदधात्मनः प्रतिघातमाशङ्क-  
मानो भगवदनुग्रहेणानुस्मृते स्वपूर्वजन्मावलिरात्मानं उन्मत्तजडान्धबधिर-  
स्वरूपेण दर्शयामास लोकस्य ॥

He did not want to create any attachment whatsoever.

शारीरं केवलं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ।

Doing nothing more than what is absolutely necessary to keep body and soul together one does not suffer misery (Bhagavad-gita). He ate what was given, and worked as was directed. One day, he was taken away to the temple of Kālī by the followers of a forest chieftain who wanted a human being for sacrifice to Kālī in order to beget a son. There when he was about to be beheaded, Kālī appeared in all her fierceness and killed the chieftain and his followers.

Jadabharata was then chosen by the servants of the king of Sind, named Rahūgana, to bear his palanquin. Being young and healthy, he seemed fit to carry that burden. But he was out of step with the other bearers and his jumping gait shook the palanquin. When the King complained the other bearers explained to him that it was the fault of Jadabharata. The king then got down from the Palanquin and told Jadabharata in words of sarcasm 'So you are old and weak and weary and cannot carry the palanquin like others.' But Jadabharata again carried the palanquin just as before. This time the king threatened him with death if he did not bear the palanquin properly.

To him Jadabharata replied, in words of wisdom :

त्वयोदितं व्यक्तमविप्रलब्धं

भर्तुः स मे स्याद्यदि वीर भारः



गन्तुर्यदि स्याद्यदि गम्यमध्वा  
 पीवेति राशौ न विदां प्रवादः ।  
 स्थौल्यं कार्यं व्याधय आधयश्च  
 क्षुतृड् भयं कलिरिच्छा जरा च  
 निद्रा रतिर्मन्युरहं मदः शुचो  
 देहेन जातस्य हि मे न सन्ति ।  
 जीवन्मृतत्वं नियमेन राज-  
 नाद्यन्तवद्यद्विकृतस्य दृष्टं  
 स्वस्वाम्यभावो ध्रुव ईड्य यत्र  
 तर्ह्यच्युतोऽसौ विधिकृत्ययोगः ।  
 विशेष बुद्धेर्विवरं मनाक्च  
 पश्याम यत्न व्यवहारतोऽन्यत्  
 क ईश्वरस्तत्र किमीशितव्यं  
 तथापि राजन् करवाम किं मे ।  
 उन्मत्त मत्त जडवत्स्वसंस्थां  
 गतस्य मे वीर चिकित्सितेन  
 अर्थः कियान् भवता शिक्षितेन  
 स्तब्ध प्रमत्तस्य च पिष्टपेषः ।

“What you said, brave sir, is certainly true. It was not said in mockery, as it might have been if there were such things as a burden to be borne and a body to bear it, and that body were eternally and inseparably attached to me; or if such notions as a distance to be traversed or a destination to be reached had any reality in them. Wise men do not speak of the spirit as ‘plump’. That is a word reserved for the psychophysical complex. Stoutness, thinness, diseases, mental sufferings, hunger, thirst, fear, strife, desire and old age, sleep, pleasure, anger, egotistic pride and grief—all these afflict one who is born with the body (out of attachment to it); they do not touch me at all. As for being ‘dead even while alive’, we see that is invariably true of all things that are subject to change, since they have a beginning and an end. If the relation of master and man were permanent, O you who are worthy of



praise, the connection between the right of the one to command and the duty of the other to obey would be permanent too. I do not see the slightest justification, apart from the practice of the world, for such distinctions. That being so, who is the ruler and who is the ruled? Still what shall I do for you, O King? Tell me. What can your punishment or correction do to me, O heroic one, since I am established in my true Self, though the world might think me mad, or drunk or an imbecile? And to try to correct one who was obstinately proud or incurably careless would be like ploughing the sands.”

The king realising that he was in the presence of a self-realised soul, fell at his feet and asked him for spiritual instruction. Jadabharata then expounded to him the philosophy of the Self.

To continue, with Hastāmalaka, sometime thereafter, when the question of writing a vārtika (explanation) on the commentaries of Sankara arose for discussion, Padmapāda suggested that Hastāmalaka may be asked to undertake the work. To this Sankara replied that while Hastāmalaka's capacity was unrivalled, he was always in deep meditation and had no attraction towards anything external. Such a person whose mind ever remained with the supreme being, could not write a big explanatory work. To a question from his disciples as to how Hastāmalaka had attained his knowledge of the Universal soul without any training or teacher, Sankara replied: “There once lived on the banks of the river Jamuna a great man who had attained perfection in penance. One day a Brahmin woman brought her two-year old boy and left him with the learned yogi and asked him to look after him while she had her bath in the river. Meanwhile, the child moved forward, fell into the river and died. The relatives of the dead child brought the dead body to the sage and wept profusely. The sage then used his powers of yoga and crept into the body of the child. He is the illustrious HASTĀMALAKA.”

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## HASTAMALAKIYAM

निमित्तं मनश्चक्षुरादिप्रवृत्तौ  
निरस्ताखिलोपाधिराकाशकल्पः ।  
रविलोकचेष्टानिमित्तं यथा यः  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ १ ॥

1. The mind is the cause for the engagement of the sensory organs like the eye in their objects, just as the sun for the activities of the world. I am that self which is distinct like the space from all the adjuncts and whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

यमग्न्युष्णवन्नित्यबोधस्वरूपं  
मनश्चक्षुरादीन्यबोधात्मकानि ।  
प्रवर्तन्त आश्रित्य निष्कम्पमेकं  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ २ ॥

2. I am that one self which is ever sentient like the heat of fire, which is unshakable and depending on which the insentient mind, eye and other senses prevail. I am that one self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

मुखाभासको दर्पणे दृश्यमानो  
मुखात् पृथक्त्वेन नैवास्ति वस्तु ।  
चिदाभासको धीषु जीवोऽपि तद्वत्  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ३ ॥

3. The phantom of a face is seen in the mirror, but there is no real object other than the faceness. So also the self appears to be low in the various intellects. But in reality it is not so. I am that self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

यथा दर्पणाभाव आभासहानौ  
मुखं विद्यते कल्पनाहीनमेकम् ।  
तथा धीवियोगे निराभासको यः  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ४ ॥



4. Just as the phantom face will be non-existent in the absence of the mirror but the real face will be existing so also that one self which is unimaginable will be really existing, when the intellect becomes defunct. I am that one self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

मनश्चक्षुरादेर्वियुक्तः स्वयं यो  
मनश्चक्षुरादेर्मनश्चक्षुरादिः ।  
मनश्चक्षुरादेरगम्यस्वरूपः  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ५ ॥

5. I am that self which is distinct from the mind, the eye and the other senses, and which is the mind, the eye and the other senses of that which is the foremost and whose nature cannot be comprehended by the senses like the mind, the eye and the like. I am that self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

य एको विभाति स्वतः शुद्धचेताः  
प्रकाशस्वरूपोपि नानेव धीषु ।  
शरावोदकस्थो यथा भानुरेकः  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ६ ॥

6. That one pure self illuminating its nature shines as many in different intellects just as the one sun in the waters of the various vessels. I am that self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

यथाऽनेकचक्षुः प्रकाशो रविर्न  
क्रमेण प्रकाशीकरोति प्रकाश्यम् ।  
अनेका धियोपस्तदैकप्रबोधः  
स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ७ ॥

7. Just as the sun which is visible to many eyes does not illuminate the objects in turns, so also that self which is self illuminating, does not make all intellects illuminating in turns but it makes effulgent all at once.

विवस्वत्प्रभातं यथारूपमक्षम्  
प्रगृह्णाति नाऽऽभातमेवं विवस्वान् ।



तथा भात अभासत्येकमक्षं

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ८ ॥

8. Just as the eye perceives that object which is illuminated by the sun but not the sun that which is thus illuminated so also that illuminating self makes the senses illuminating. I am that self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

यथा सूर्यमेकोप्यनेकश्चलासु

स्थिरास्वप्सु चैकोग्निभाव्यस्वरूपः ।

चलासु प्रभिन्नः स धीष्येक एव

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ९ ॥

9. Just as the one sun appears to many in the rippling waters but it appears like a ball of fire in the calm surface of the same waters so also the self appears to be many in unsteady minds but it is the same in steady minds. I am that one self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

घनश्छन्नदृष्टिर्घनश्छन्नमर्कं

यथा मन्यते निष्प्रभं चातिमूढः ।

तथा बद्धवत्भाति यो मूढदृष्टेः

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ १० ॥

10. Just as a big fool whose eye is shrouded in darkness caused by the thick clouds considers that the sun is covered by the thick clouds so also those who are ignorant of the real nature of the self consider that it is embodied. I am that one self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.

समस्तेषु वस्तुष्वनुस्यूतमेकं

समस्तानि वस्तूनि यं न स्पृशन्ति ।

वियद्वत्सदा शुद्धमच्छस्वरूपः

स नित्योपलब्धिस्वरूपोऽहमात्मा ॥ ११ ॥

11. I am that one self which is immanent in all the objects, but which is not touched by all those objects and which is as pure as the clear space. I am that one self whose nature is everlasting existence, knowledge and bliss.



उपाधौ यथा भेदता सन्मणीनाम्  
 तथा भेदता बुद्धिभेदेषु तेऽपि ।  
 यथा चन्द्रिकाणां जले चञ्चलत्वं  
 तथा चञ्चलत्वं तवापीह विष्णो ॥ १२ ॥

12. Oh Lord ! Just as the crystalline gems appear to be different due to the difference in substratum so also you appear to be different due to the difference in the attitude of your intellect. Just as the moon beams appear to be wavering in a sheet of water so also you seem to be wavering.

#### POETS' PRAYER

अब्दार्धेन हरिं प्रसन्नमकरोदौत्तानपादिः शिशुः  
 सप्ताहेन नृपः परीक्षिदबला यामार्ध्यतः पिङ्गला ।  
 खट्वाङ्गो घटिकाद्वयेन नवतिप्रायेण तन्नव्यथे  
 त्वं कारुण्यनिधिं प्रपद्य शरणं शेषायुषा तोषये ॥

The infant son of Uttanapada (Dhruva) in half a year, King Parikshit in seven days, the lady Pingala in half a Yāma, Khatvanga in two hours obtained the grace of Vishnu. I am not worried even if I am ninety years old. I shall please Him, the treasure house of compassion, during the rest of my life.



## As others see us

### BRAHMA

If the red slayer think he slays,  
Or if the slain think he is slain  
They know not well the subtle ways  
I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;  
Shadow and sunlight are the same;  
The vanished gods to me appear;  
And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out;  
When me they fly, I am the wings;  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,  
And pine in vain the sacred Seven;  
But thou, meek lover of the good!  
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven.

—*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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### GOETHE ON KALIDASA'S SAKUNTALAM

Wouldst thou the young years' blossom  
And the fruits of its decline  
And all by which the soul is charmed,  
Enraptured, feasted, fed,

Wouldst thou the heaven and earth  
In one name combine,  
I name thee O! Sakuntala  
And all at once is said.



# SRIVIDYA : A SYNOPTIC EXPOSITION

By

R. Sathyanarayana

Of the myriad modes of self-realisation practised by the Hindu *Sadhaka*,<sup>1</sup> Tantra holds a unique place of honour. It not only permeates the various religious experiential strata but extends in several other dimensions, too. The roots of magic, mime, dancing and drawing, for example, are deeply diffused in the soil of the tantra.

The term 'Tantra' is derived from two roots, *tan* and *trai* and is defined as the discipline which extends knowledge (of the self) and protects the practitioner. By adopting alternative cognate meanings, the nature and scope of the tantra may be explained. Thus it means to spread or diffuse the light (of knowledge) over (the world), to shine forth (the effulgence of the atman), to endure in time (being of the nature of Brahman), to (enable the *Sadhaka* to) extend toward or reach to (the experience of Brahman), to prepare a way for (self-realisation), to direct (the seeker's) *gati*<sup>2</sup> (to moksa), to propagate (brahma-vidya<sup>3</sup>), to perform sacrifice (by offering the individual self to the universal self) etc.

The fundamental philosophical postulate of the Tantra is that the Primordial cause of the Cosmos, *Parabrahman*<sup>4</sup>, may be regarded as with and without *kala*<sup>5</sup>, which is also referred to as *Prakrti*, *shakti*, *maya* etc. Without *kala*, it is *nirguna*<sup>6</sup> and immutable. In its *sakala*<sup>7</sup> form, *shakthi* is an agent generated by it and is equally beginningless and integral with *brahman*. In this stage, manifestation proceeds through a substratic *prakasha*<sup>8</sup> of *brahman* on which is superimposed apparent multiplicity called *vimarsha*<sup>9</sup> through the agency of *shakthi*. For such cosmic evolution *shakti* transits through several consecutive phases such as *kala*, *bindu* and *nada*<sup>10</sup>. It assumes the trifold attributes of *guna*<sup>11</sup> and progressively evolves into the categories

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1. Aspirant;      2. Pathway;      3. Knowledge of Brahman

4. Ultimate Brahman;      5. Attributes;      6. Attributes

7. with attributes      8. sentiency      9. manifestation.

10. Steps in evolution i.e., primordial stress, first manifestation, proliferation      11. Satva, Rajas, Tamas



of cosmic creation ; thus evolving from the subtle to the gross in manifestation. This *brahmashakthi*<sup>12</sup> is called kundalini in its microcosmic form. It operates in an exactly parallel manner in the evolution of the macrocosm and in an exact reversal for the process of dissolution. The microcosm is an exact miniature of the macrocosm and may be used as an instrument for the fulfilment of the *purusharthas*.<sup>13</sup> Moksha is the realisation in one's own experience the reverse progress of shakthi, and its merger with *Prakasharupi brahman*,<sup>14</sup> also called Shiva. Such unification is called samarasya and this state represents *brahmajnana*<sup>15</sup> which is no different from the state of brahman. This is why the tantra is called brahmavidya.

Tantra is practised in six ways, depending on the deity chosen for upasana : *saura*, *vaishnava*, *shaiva*, *kaumara*, *ganayatya*, and *shaktha*.<sup>16</sup> The foregoing is largely the view of the shakta tantra, but equally applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the other systems also, because the central postulate in the Tantra is shakti. The sadhaka performs upasana of these deities directly as shaktirupa or as consorted to the respective feminine principle representing the shakti.

The literature on tantra shastra is generally divided into vishnukranta, rathakranta and ashvakranta, each class said to consist of sixty-four treatises. The number of tantra works exceeds some five hundred, actually available or known by extraction or reference. They are again classified into groups or related texts ; the agama is a tantra revealed to the Devi by Shiva ; the nigama is revealed by Devi to Shiva. The tantra involves satvika upasana while the Yamala and Damara involve the rajasa and tamasa techniques of sadhana.

The subject matter of the tantra is described as sarga, pratisarga, mantranirnaya, yantranirnaya, Adhyatmavarnana, tirthavarnana, narakavarnana, ashrama dharma, yuga dharma, raja dharma, dana dharma, devata samsthana, bhuta samsthana, jyotisa samsthana, viprasamsthana, vibudhotpatti, vyavahara, vrata paribhasa, purana, akhyana, kosa, stripumlakshana, haracakra, shauchaashauca etc. The Tantra may contain some

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12. Power of Brahman      13. Goals of life      14. Same

as 4 above (Ultimate Brahman)      15. Realisation of Brahman

16. Sun, Vishnu, Siva, Subrahmanya, Ganapathy, Devi



or all of these. The agama describes srishti, pralaya, devatar-chana, sadhana, purashcharana, shatkarma, and dhyana yoga. The Yamala describes srishti, jyotisha, nityakrtya, karmasutra, varnabheda, jatibheda, yugadharma and akhyana. The Damara is so called because it teaches maya siddhis, chamatkaras. The Shambara is another class of tantrik works which describe the siddhis of illusions and hallucinations.

### SRIVIDYA

Sākta Tantra is called Shrividya. It derives this name for several reasons. The central deity worshipped here is shakti as Mother who is called Shri and Vidya. Vidya is here synonymous with Brahma-vidya or para-vidya. The mantra of this Vidya finds its culmination in the Shri Bija; its yantra is called shriyantra. Thus, it is the giver of apavarga or *mōksha*<sup>17</sup> which is symbolised by Shri; it is also the giver of *trivarga*<sup>18</sup> represented by Lakshmi, Sarasvati, Shobha, Sampat and Vibhuti<sup>19</sup> which are again collectively symbolised by Sri. In fact, Shrividya owes its popular usage for this reason. It is essentially a pragmatic and experimental discipline. A very large number of Hindus, though not initiated into vidya, perform recitation or parayana of *Lalitasahasranama*, Trisati, Astottarasatanama, the Saptashati etc., if not daily, at least on Tuesdays and Fridays. The Sahasranamaparayana is said to be especially efficacious on the days like sankranti, visuvatsamkranti, the three days of his own janmanakshatra, navami, chaturdasi and the full moon. The 'chandihoma' is performed and shriyantra worshipped by many who have not received initiation or diksha. All these modes of worship promise the fulfilment of many desires and the removal of evils, sorrow, obstacle or ill-luck. The *kamya-vidhis*<sup>20</sup> enjoined for the mantra, yantra, homa and parayana in this discipline are probably the most comprehensive and varied of all tantrik forms. Indeed, the common Hindu hardly regards the religious practice of the Shrividya techniques for *trivarga*

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17. Salvation, here unity with Brahman 18. Trivarga refers to the first three goals of life, Dharma, Artha and Kama or the three gifts mentioned by the author 19. effulgence, wealth and prosperity. 20. the rituals meant to accomplish some desire.  
21. the objectives of man, dharma, artha and kama.



Sadhana<sup>21</sup> as tantric at all. Some forms of upasana offer only liberation or apavarga but cannot give the trivarga, while the others can give only the kamya-bhogas<sup>22</sup> but no moksha ; shrividya is the only upāsanamārga which gives both, here and now. Bhaskara Makhin, for example, says :

यत्रास्ति भोगो न च तत्र मोक्षः  
यत्रास्ति मोक्षो न च तत्र भोगः ।  
श्रीसुन्दरीसेवनतत्पराणां  
भोगश्च मोक्षश्च करस्थ एव ॥

The vidya claims to comprise some 640 million mantras ; each of them may be employed for either end ; it has thousands of yantras and mandalas, several hundreds of iconic forms. As will be presently mentioned, the vidya is practised in several recensions. All these may be employed to attain either spiritual or material benefits. Most forms of shakti worship or shakti cults in India and Greater India may be ultimately traced to Shrividya, in at least a vulgarised or deteriorated form. It is, therefore, no exaggeration to say that Shrividya is the most widely known and practised form of popular worship and specialised mode of realisation among the tantras.

### ORIGIN

The origins of Shrividya are inevitably lost in the mists of time. As mother worship of course, it may be traced to the cradle of ancient culture—the Hindu, the Chinese, the Egyptian and the Greek. The proto-Indic-civilisation of the Indus Valley, for example, reveals clear indications of Mother worship. Some historians of the tantra opine that Shrividya, at least in its *kaula* recension, was imported from Tibet. There is ample evidence to show that the opposite is true. This Shakta tantra was transplanted into Tibet by Indian Buddhist missionaries and this, after an eventful history, returned to India in a modified form, called Chinachara.<sup>23</sup> If any exotic origin may be considered at all, I suggest as a hypothesis that Vedic culture borrowed this and adapted it from Dravidian culture, as it probably did Yoga and the Vratya cult. As in the case of many

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22. worldly enjoyments. 23. the practice current in China, that is to say, beyond the Himalayan ranges.



an other borrowal and assimilation into the body of Vaidika Dharma, an early attempt was made to bestow Vedic sanction or derivation on the tantra, especially Shrividyā. It is a foundational tenet of our eternal religion (sanatana dharma) that the Veda is not of human origin (apaurusheya), all inclusive and is the source book of cosmic creation. Everything in the believer's way of life, spiritual, religious, secular or physical is sought to be derived from the Veda directly or indirectly. Tantra is no exception.

Several such attempts to confer vedopavasathi<sup>24</sup> on Shrividyā may be noted here. Most of such attempts are very late—as late as the 17th and 18th centuries A.D. Some interpretations are fanciful while others are plausible and substantial. Even the Vedapurusa is said to treasure the Shrividyā as a secret and to reveal it to those who have special competency (adhikara). Thus the sage Durvasa says that the “vagbhava” bija *ai* (along with the *bindu* taken from *Pranava*) is formed from the initial letters of the traī-vidyā-Gayatri as the essence of the Veda. The triple-footed or tripada-form of this mantra is familiar, while along with its secret fourth foot, it is Shrividyā; in fact, the Pancadashi mantra is interpreted to show that it inheres three cycles of the Gayatri. Several Upanishads such as the Tripura, Bhavana, Bhavricha, Tripuratapini Sita, Alla, Dvitiya, Kama-*raja*, Kilitódhara, Kalika, Kalimedhadiksita, Guhyakali, Guhya Shodha, Pitambara, Raja-syamala, Shyama, Shrichakra, Shrividyataraka, Shoda, Sumukhi, Hamsashodha, Gayatri, Gayatri-*rahasya* etc., etc., reveal this Vidyā. None of them is really ancient. They were probably composed from time to time both to confer Vedic sanction and authority as well as to focus attention on different forms of aspects of the Vidyā. Of these, the Tripuraupanisat, called the Shankhayana Shruti contains the foundational mantra, the panchadashi, in a mnemonic symbolism. The expressions Ādividyā and Vishvamata in this passage are significant.

However, the Vedic authority for Srividya is not all apocryphal. The Veda has passages which bear interpretation only on the basis of this tantra. The Srisūkta and Durgā sūkta are two such instances. As the very names indicate, they

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24. Ultimate reliance on Vedic authority



involve the upasana of Sri and Durga, the very core of this vidya. Several other mantras may also be sited here : —

चत्वारि ईं बिभ्रति, राजाधिराजाय, गन्धद्वारां दुराधर्षा, यस्माज्यातं नपुरा,  
लोकस्य दारा मूर्तिमत्पवित्रं

Besides the above, I may indicate briefly three more passages from the Veda which admit of a plausible exegesis in terms of the Vidya concepts. The first is the famous prashni Sukta of Arunopanisat, an authentic and ancient part of the Taittiriya Aranyaka and occurs at its beginning. As the name indicates, the passage is all about Aruna, who is Sri. The ṛsi who envisions this Upanisat and the Devi is appropriately named Arunaketu. During a Satra, a clan of munis called Prsni-s elucidate the Vidya in dialogue form. Secondly, the same work contains an upāsana of Devi in the opening passage repeatedly.

Yet another passage commencing with पुत्रो निऋत्या वै देहः and ending with तत्संभवस्य व्रतं with Srividya—oriented exegesis occurs in the same text.

Another passage opening with words तदिन् धनुरित्यज्यं and ending with प्रत्येव तिष्ठति has been interpreted as meaning Srividya tenets : Again Taittiriya Brahmana has a short passage commencing with इयं वावसरधा in the third prapathaka which readily lends itself to such a treatment. The Atharva Veda clearly describes the Shricakra in the following passage :—

अष्ट चक्रा नव द्वारा देवानां पुरयो दया ।

तस्माः हिरण्मयः कोशः स्वर्गो लोको ज्योतिषावृतः ॥

Similarly several illustrations may be adduced from ancient or early Upanisats to show that this vidya had been accepted into the fold of the Veda and practised very early in India. These passages are invariably latent and have to be placed in a perspective before their relation with this tantrik mode may be recognised. I shall be content with only one example from Svetashvatara Upanishad.

अजामेकां लोहितकृष्णशुक्लां ।

बह्वीः प्रजाः सृजमानां सरूपाः ॥

[ *To be continued* ]



## KRISHNA KARNAMRITA

### THE INFANT WHO SWALLOWED THE EARTH

कृष्णेनाम्ब गतेन रन्तमधुना मृद्वक्षिता स्वेच्छया ।  
तथ्यं कृष्ण क एवमाह मुसली मिथ्याम्ब पश्याननम् ॥  
व्यादेहीति विदारिते शिशुमुखे दृष्ट्वा समस्तं जग-  
न्माता यस्य जगाम विस्मयपदं पायात्स नः केशवः ॥

“ When Krishna went forth to play, to day, He swallowed  
mud to His heart's content—Is this true, Krishna ? ”

“ Who said this ? ”

“ Balarama ”

“ Quite false, mother ; look at my mouth ! ”

“ Open ”

Forthwith, when the (seeming) Child's mouth was wide  
opened, His mother beheld therein all the universe, and was  
struck with wonder ; may such Keshava protect us !

### THE LOVE-LORN GOPI

विक्रेतुकामा किल गोपकन्या  
मुरारिपादार्पितचित्तवृत्तिः ।  
दध्यादिकं मोहवशादवोच-  
द्गोविन्द दामोदर माधवेति ॥

Went forth the maid  
with curds and butter to sell,  
But her heart at Murali's  
feet so deep did dwell,  
That fancy-lost damsel  
raised the cry :  
“ Here oh ! Damodar, Govind  
Madhav — ”



# Philosophy for the Common Man

## ५. अस्नेहदीपन्यायः

The maxim of the lamp devoid of oil. This maxim is closely related to another, वातदीपन्यायः, the blowing out of the lamp by a gust of wind. The import is that the lamp of ignorance, which is responsible for the flame of life will be put out by the breeze of 'philosophical wisdom' (*tattvajñāna*); the oil here refers to the error or superimposition (*adhyāsa*), which will run out as a result of wisdom. The oil is regarded as the material conditions (*sāmagri*) favourable to emergence of the phenomenal perspective. When that is gone, the real and transcendental outlook dawns.

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## ६. आकाशमुष्टिहननन्यायः

The maxim of pounding thin air (sky) with ones fists. This is a Mīmāṃsā maxim to illustrate the futility of arguing against the fact that validity is self-reliant (*svataḥpramāṇa*). Madhava's *Sarvadarśana-samgraha* mentions this maxim :

तस्मादुत्पत्तौ ज्ञप्तौ च परतस्त्वे प्रमाणसम्भवात् स्वतःसिद्धं प्रामाण्यं इत्येतत्  
पूतिकूष्माणायत इति चेत्, एतत् आकाशमुष्टिहननायते ॥

The opponent of the Mīmāṃsā compares the argument of self-validity to 'an over-ripe and rotten gourd', and the defendent compares this attack to 'fighting with the sky', a vain and wasted effort. The Buddhist texts have an other maxim : 'like tying knots in the sky' (आकासे गण्ठिकरणकालो विय), also meaning needless and futile effort.

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## ७. उष्ट्रकण्टकभक्षणन्यायः

The maxim of the camel feeding on thorns. It is well-known that camels are fond of thorny vegetation, and that they will eat with relish leaves and thorns. Anandagiri, commentator on Śaṅkara, mentions this maxim in connection with the argument that sense-objects are by themselves neither pleasurable nor painful :



भावना तत्रज्ञातियोग्या वासना तद्विशेषात् उष्ट्रादीनां कण्टकादौ सुखादि-  
दर्शनात् ।

on *Vedānta-sūtra-bhāṣya*, II, 2, 1.

The idea is that the same objects are found pleasant by some people and painful by others. 'One man's meat is another man's poison'. Things are not good or bad in themselves.

There is another sense in which this maxim is understood. The camel, being a stupid animal, does not mind the great pain involved in eating the thorns of the Śamī plant, because it is fond of the śamī-leaves which are few. The pain is much, and the pleasure is little, but the camel does not care.

उष्ट्रस्य शमीकण्टकवेधजातदुःखकालेऽपि शमीपत्रभक्षणसुखलेशो यथा  
तथाऽभीष्टविषयोपार्जनदुःखकाले तदुपार्जितद्रव्यजसुखलेशो यत्रोपदिश्यते तत्रास्य  
प्रवृत्तिः ।

(*Vacaspatyam*)

## ८. एकमनुसन्धित्सतोऽपरं प्रच्यवते ।

The maxim that one would lose a thing when seeking for an other. The import is that if a man is not content with what he has, and likes to obtain more, he will lose what he has, in the bargain. But the original context was that of a man carrying two earthen pots ; one got broke and while he was putting the pieces together, the other one fell down.

## ९. अहिकुण्डलन्यायः

The maxim of the snake and its coils. Bādarāyaṇa's *Vedānta-sūtra*, III, 2, 27 mentions this maxim :

उभयव्यपदेशात्तु अहिकुण्डलवत् ।

Śamkara interprets the maxim to mean the identity of the real despite its differences in the mode of appearance (यथाहिरित्यभेदः कुण्डलाभोगप्रांशुत्वादीनि भेद एवं इहापि ।) The snake may coil itself, spread out its hood or stand erect ; but it is the snake all the same.



## SRI DAKSHINAMURTHI STOTRAM

A Study based on the Commentaries  
Manasollasa and Tattvasudha

D. S. Subbaramaiya

*Contd. from the previous issue]*

The *Sruti* (Ka. U. 4-1) says—

पराञ्चिखानि व्यतृणत्स्वयंभू-  
स्तस्मात्पराङ्पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।  
कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्ष-  
दावृत्तचक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ॥

(The Self-existent has condemned the senses to be outgoing. Therefore one looks outward, and not the *Atman* within. A certain intelligent man desirous of immortality with senses withdrawn, sees the *Atman* within.)

Thus, in order to make the disciple see his own Self *pratyagāt-mānam* as It is, first this obstacle of the natural tendency of the *antahkarana* must be removed. The *Panchadasee* (6-70) says

अहंवृत्तिरिदंवृत्तिरित्यन्तःकरणं द्विधा ।

(The internal organ is two-fold—of the mode ‘I’ and of the mode ‘this’.)

*Idam* here refers to whatsoever is considered by him as being outside, ‘*bahyam*’ that is other than oneself, *aham*, the Knower. The *idam* which is the *vishvam* is evidently relative to the *Aham*. Says the *Panchadasee* (6-71).

अहंप्रत्ययबीजत्वं इदंवृत्तेरितिस्फुटम् ।

अविदित्वास्वमात्मानं बाह्यं वेत्ति न तु कश्चित् ॥

In effect, this would mean that a direct awareness of the cogniser is a pre-requisite for knowing the truth of the cognised. For this purpose careful enquiry into the make up of *Aham* would be necessary. The *Idamamsa* involved therein could then be removed, leaving the *Anidamamsa* uncontaminated by it. Also the investigation pertaining to the *Swaroopa* of *Idam*



based on the *Sruti* “इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा” (Br. U-6-5-7); (All this is but the very *Atman*.) “सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म”, (Ch. U-3-14), (Verily all this is *Brahman*), “नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन” (Ka. U. 2-4-11) (There is no diversity here at all), leads decisively to the knowledge that the *Idam* is only *Tatasthalakshana*—the qualification per accidens of the underlying *Chaitanya*. The *Sruti* further declares that this is the same as the substratum, *Anidamamsa* of the *Aham*. Thus would be accomplished the *Granthibheda* the sunderance of the knot referred to in the *Mundaka Sruti*, culminating in the *Sākshātkara* of *Swātmanamēvādwayam* resulting in the deliverance of the individual from any type of limitation whatsoever. This, however, is a rare event as is seen from the *Sruti* (Ka. U-1-2-7)—

श्रवणायापि बहुभिर्यो न लभ्यः

शृण्वन्तोऽपि बहवो यन्नविद्युः ।

आश्चर्यो वक्ता कुशलोऽस्य लब्धा

आश्चर्यो ज्ञाता कुशलानुशिष्टः ॥

(About whom even the hearing is not attainable by many, whom, many, though hearing, know not, the expounder of Him is a wonder; able, the attainer of Him; and a wonder, the knower of Him instructed by the able.)

This is brought out by (*Manasollasa* I-14, 15).

श्रुत्याचार्यप्रसादेन योगाभ्यासवशेन च ।

ईश्वरानुग्रहेणापि स्वात्मबोधो यदा भवेत् ॥

भुक्तं यथाऽन्नं कुक्षिस्थं स्वात्मत्वेनैव पश्यति ।

पूर्णाहिन्ताकबलितं विश्वं योगीश्वरस्तथा ॥

(When, by *Sruti*, by the Master's Favour, by the power gained by the practice of *Yoga* and by the Grace of *Isvara*, arises the Self-knowledge, then, just as the man regards the food he has eaten as one with himself, the Adept *Yogin* sees the universe as one with his Self, absorbed as it is in the Universal Self that he is.)

That is why the instruction intended for this purpose characterises *visvam* as ‘निजान्तर्गतं दर्पणदृश्यमाननगरीतुल्यम्’ and proceeds to point out ‘एवं पश्यन् प्रबोधसमये स्वात्मानमेवाद्वयम् साक्षात्कुरुते ।

That such an eventuality is an extraordinary occurrence is seen to be testified to by emphasizing the word *yah* in the hymn



यः साक्षात्कुरुते तस्मै नमः—to him who realises, obeisance. The disciple therefore is asked to recognise to start with that the entire universe, विश्वं—विविधप्रत्यययगम्यं विद्यदादि सर्वमिदं जगत् यत् भूतभौतिकविषयजातम् The entire universe starting from the ether apprehended variously consisting of the elements and their evolutes is within himself *nijāntargatam*. This by implication means that, in reality, Atman himself is *Brahman*, the support of the universe. The *Mānasollāsa* refers to the *Sruti* (Thai. Br. 2-8-8)

अन्तरस्मिन्निमे लोकाः । अन्तर्विश्वमिदं जगत् ।

ब्रह्मैव भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तेन कोऽर्हति स्पर्धितुम् ॥

ब्रह्मन् देवास्त्रयस्त्रिंशत् । ब्रह्मन् इन्द्रप्रजापती ।

ब्रह्मन् ह विश्वा भूतानि । नावीवान्तस्समाहिता ॥

(These worlds are situated in *Brahman*, this universe consisting of the stationary and the moving is in *Brahman*. *Brahman* is superior to all the created ones. Who is capable of competing with it? O! *Brahman*! in *Brahman* are situated the thirty-three *Devas*, *Indra* and *Prajapati*, as also all the creatures just like those in a boat.)

This is directly opposed to the so called commonsense view that the universe is outside of oneself. Here, as in many other situations there is a reversal of the commonly accepted notions as a result of enquiry—*vichārena viparyeti* (*Panchadasee*—2-66) as Sri Vidhyaranyacharanah puts it. The disciple is well able to take the teaching in this form. Also, for him *sakridupadesa* along with the *sūchanā*—hint regarding the type of *vichāra* intended—is enough to enable him to grasp the situation. Unlike the usual run of investigators who are steadfast adherents or sticklers to certain views which they cherish without question and demand that the method as well as the content of the teaching be accommodated in conformity with them, for example, the *nānājeevavādins* or the *srushtidrushtivādins*, those who are unable easily to shake off the notion of many *jeevās* inhabiting the world, the disciple for whom the present instruction is offered is a *vyuthpanna* who can take the *mukhya vedāntasiddhānta* viz. the *ekajivavāda*. This is brought out in the *Tatvasudha* on the eighth stanza of the hymn which points out that even though the so called individual is in actuality *Paramārtha*, *Brahman* Itself, because of *Avidyā* or *Māyā* he sees himself as though involved

in *Samsāra* and gets out of it as it were. The *Samkshēpa sāreeraka* (2-162) quoted therein

तस्माद्ब्रह्माविद्यया जीवभावं प्राप्य स्थित्वातावकेतुस्वरूपे त्वच्चित्तेन स्पन्दितं  
विश्वजातं आकाशादिक्षमावसानं च पश्येः ।

(Hence the Supreme Self attains the state of individual soul due to Avidya and It remains as your true nature and it perceives the universe from ether to the earth which are superimposed by your Avidya.)

is an expression of the *drushtisrushtivāda* which may be succinctly expressed as 'ब्रह्मैव स्वाविद्यया संसरतीव, स्वविद्यया मुच्यत इव।' The *Sruti* (Br. U. 1-4-10)

‘ब्रह्म वा इदमग्र आसीत् तदात्मानमेवावेदहं ब्रह्मस्मीति तस्मात्तत्सर्वमभवत्’

(This (Self) was indeed *Brahman* in the beginning. It knew itself verily as ‘I am *Brahman*’; thence It became the all.)

may be remembered in this connection. The purport of this *Sruti* is brought out by Sri Vidyaranyacharanah (in the *Anubhuthi Prakasha*) in the stanza—

ब्रह्मैव बोधात्प्राग्जीवः भूत्वाऽऽत्मानमवेत्पुनः ।

अहं ब्रह्मेति तद्वोधात् सर्वात्मिकमभूत्तदा ॥

The realisation of this *sarvātmatva* has two phases. First, the recognition that whatever is experienced in parlance the *idam* i.e. the *viswam* is not different from oneself—‘अहमन्यवदामि’ (I appear as other than myself.) as the *Sruti* (The Bi. U. 2) says. This is the *pūrnāhantānubhava* or *iswaratwānubhava*. The disciple equipped to receive the teaching in the manner of this *prakriyā* mentioned, is therefore instructed first to recognize that the universe is within himself. The Absolute existing in its own right is given expression to in the hymn *swātmānamevā-dwayam*. The word *eva* here means,

‘द्वयशब्दवाच्यविश्वशून्यं प्रविलीनप्रपञ्चम्’

(Bereft of the universe spoken of in dualistic terms, i.e., the universe having been sublated.)

The *Sruti* (Br. U. 2-4-14) says—

‘यत्रत्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत्केन कं पश्येत्’

(When, verily everything has become just one's own Self, then whereby and what can one see?)



etc. The state pertaining to the *sākshatkāra* in this manner is the second phase. To bring home to the disciple this Absolute state, the illustration of the reflection of a city—*nagaree*, abounding in variety as seen in a mirror is given. Says the *Tattvasudhā* on stanza-1—

निर्विकारे नीरन्ध्रेऽति स्वच्छेऽसङ्गे सूक्ष्मे प्रतीचि जगतः तद्विपरीतस्य स्थितौ  
तत्सदृशं दृष्टान्तमाह—दर्पणदृश्यमाननगरीतुल्यमिति ।

(The appearance in the changeless, homogeneous, pellucid, taintless subtle inner Self, of the world with quite the opposite characteristics is illustrated appropriately.)

and also quotes the *Panchadasee* (13-101)

निश्छिद्रदर्पणे भाति वस्तुगर्भं बृहज्जगत् ।  
सच्चित्सुखे तथा नानाजगद्गर्भमिदं वियत् ॥

(In a flawless mirror the expansive space with all the things in it, is seen. Similarly, in this mass of Existence and Consciousness is seen this space comprising the variegated universe.)

The *Tattvasudhā* refers also in this connection to the *Yoga-vāsistha* (La. Yo. Va. 6-4-9 & 8)

द्यौः क्षमावायुरथाकाशः पर्वतास्सरितो दिशः ।  
सन्ति तस्यां शिला सा च सुषिरा न मनागपि ॥  
अप्यत्यन्तघनाङ्गायास्सुनीरन्ध्राकृतेरपि ।  
विद्यतेऽन्तर्जगद्वृन्दं व्योम्नीवविततोऽनिलः ॥

(The bed rock in which the celestial regions, the earth, the atmosphere, the ether, mountains, rivers and the directions inhere is (absolutely homogeneous) without any perforation whatsoever.)

In spite of it (the bed rock) being such, the cluster of words is seen to exist in it like the atmosphere spread in the sky.)

The *silā* referred to in which the entire world is said to inhere is the *pratyakchit* according to the *Vasistha* — (La. Yo. Va. 6-4-7)

चिच्छिलैषा मयोक्ताते यस्यामन्तर्जगत्स्थितिः ।  
घनत्वैकात्मकत्वादि वशादेशा शिलैवचित् ॥

The commentary on the line — यत्रैष जगदाभासः दर्पणान्तःपुरं यथा in the *Vivekachudamani* (292) by Jagadguru Sri Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Pujyapadah says—

‘स्वच्छे अच्छिद्रे दर्पणेन्तः यथा पुरं जनगिरिनिदीप्रासादादिरूपं पुरं प्रतिफलति अन्तरवर्तमानोऽपि दृश्यते ।’

(Even as a city with men, mountain, river, palace etc., is seen inside a flawless mirror, by reflection though it does not exist therein.) Thus the import of the oft quoted illustration is that the city is seen in the mirror where, in fact, it is not and cannot be. Only the mirror is. Similarly the universe in the *Atman*. The *Atman* alone is. The question now arises as to how the universe which does not exist in reality comes to be seen and that, outside of oneself as it were, unlike the mind and its modifications such as likes and dislikes which are experienced as being inside. The answer is—‘पश्यन् आत्मनि मायया बहिरिबोद्धतं यथा निद्रया’ ।

The *Mānasōllāsa* (I, 8) on it is—

अन्तरस्मिन्निमेलोकाः अन्तर्विश्वमिदं जगत् ।

बहिर्वन्माययाऽऽभाति दर्पणे प्रतिबिम्बितम् ॥

(All the things which one perceives exist within (in one's Self); within is the whole of this universe. By *Maya*, it appears as if external, like a reflection in a mirror.)

The word *bahihi* in the hymn means—‘स्वात्मनः पृथक्, इदन्ताऽऽस्पदतया’ (Other than the *Atman*, offering incidence for reference as ‘this’). Thus it is said that it is because of *Maya* that the universe appears and that outside of oneself. That such is the possibility is shown by the illustration given—viz. that of the dream.

The dream experience is common to all—the lay and the learned. A consideration of the dream state is truly rewarding. That is why it finds an important place in the *Mandukya Karikas* as also among the *Badarayana Sutas*. That the dream world is sublated—*bādhita* on waking up is the experience of everybody. The *Sutra Bhashya* says—

‘अहमद्य स्वप्ने हस्तिनमद्राक्षम्, नेदानीं तं पश्यामि इति दृष्टमेव प्रतिबद्धः प्रत्याचष्टे’ ।

(The dream experience given expression to on waking as ‘To-day in my dream, I saw an elephant which, now, I do not see’ shows that only the object of that experience is discarded.)

Also it is pointed out therein that the dream experience is given expression to in the manner ‘आरुक्षमिव गिरिशृङ्गं, अद्राक्षमिव वनराजिम्’



(I ascended, as it were, the summit of a mountain. I saw, as it were, a cluster of trees) (Su. Bha. 2-3-15-40) incorporating the particle 'iva' therein. This shows that the dream objects had been conceived to be there though in reality they were not there. Further, though the dream experience is purely 'private' to the individual, he fancies then that men and matters outside of him are involved. Such is the capacity for concocting phenomena on the part of sleep which overpowers an individual. The sruti (Br. U. 4-3-10) brings out all these factors when it says—

‘न तत्र रथा न रथयोगा न पन्थानो भवन्त्यथ रथान् रथयोगान् पथः  
सृजते’।

(There are no chariots in that state, no horses and no roads. Yet he creates chariots, horses and roads.)

A detailed discussion is given in the *Sandhyadhikarana Bhashya*, particularly that pertaining to the *sutra* (3-2-1-3)

‘मायामात्रन्तु कास्त्र्येनानभिव्यक्तस्वरूपत्वात्’

(But it (Viz.; the dream world) is mere illusion, on account of its nature not manifesting itself with the totality (of the attributes of reality.)

In the light of the dream illustration, the import of the hymn which declares that all the parlance of the world even in the waking state is due to *Maya*, can be comprehended. The *Panchadasee* says—

ईदृशो महिमा दृष्टो निद्राशक्तेर्यदा तदा ।  
मायाशक्तेरचिन्त्योऽयं महिमेति किमद्भुतम् ॥  
शयाने पुरुषे निद्रा स्वप्नं बहुविधं सृजेत् ।  
ब्रह्मण्येवं निर्विकारे विकारान् कल्पयत्यसौ ॥  
निद्राशक्तिर्यथा जीवे दुर्घटस्वप्नकारिणी ।  
ब्रह्मण्येषा स्थिता माया सृष्टिस्थित्यन्तकारिणी ॥

(13-89, 90, 86)

(If such greatness is seen (even) in the power of sleep, what is there to wonder at if this greatness of the power of *Maya* is inconceivable ?

When the man is lying down, sleep creates dreams variously. Likewise this (*Maya*) creates in the changeless *Brahman* (several) changeful things.

Just as the power of sleep creates in the *Jeeva* impossible dreams this *Maya* seated in *Brahman*, brings about creation, sustenance and dissolution (of the universe.)

It is therefore that the *Mānasōllāsa* says—

स्वप्ने स्वान्तर्गतं विश्वं यथा पृथगवेक्षते ।  
तथैव जाग्रत्कालेऽपि प्रपञ्चोऽयं विविच्यताम् ॥  
निद्रया दर्शितान् अर्थान् न पश्यति यथोत्थितः ।  
सम्यग् ज्ञानोदयादूर्ध्वं तथा विश्वं न पश्यति ॥ (I. 9-10)

(Just as in the dream state the universe existing in one's own Self is seen as if it were external, so be it known that even in the waking state this universe exists within and yet appears to be external.

Just as, when awake, a man sees not the things which were presented to his view during sleep, so subsequent to the dawn of right knowledge, he sees not the universe.)

In support of this is quoted the *Mandukyakarika*—

अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।  
अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥ (1-16)

(When the *Jeeva* sleeping (i.e., not knowing the Reality) under the influence of the beginningless *Maya* is awakened, then does he realise (in himself) the Unborn, the Sleepless, the Dreamless, the One without a second.)

Incidentally, it may be pointed out that the *vyakhyāna* on this *kārikā* draws attention to the fact that the *Advaitasakshatkara* is a rare event as already mentioned—

‘अनादिमायया सुप्तः’ इति स्वतो जीवस्य ज्ञानं न संभाव्यत इति सूचयति । ‘यदा प्रबुध्यते’ इत्युक्त्या अन्यतोऽपि प्रबोधस्य दुर्लभत्वं द्योतयति ।

(The expression *Anādimāyayā Supthah* indicates, that the *Jeeva* by himself will not be able to secure knowledge as a matter of course. Even the awakening by another is a rare eventuality as is pointed out by the phrase *yadā prabudhyate*.)

It is thus seen that *Maya* is to be regarded as a power which has two phases—The *āvaranashakthi* which conceals the non-dual nature of the *Atman* and the *vikshepashakthi* which projects the unreal universe in its diverse aspect. This *Maya* is beginningless, but ceases to be on the dawn of realization.

[to be continued



# Sayings of the Sadguru

## HAPPINESS

All men desire happiness. But what is happiness? Is it wealth or good food or dress? Not these surely. Real happiness is that on obtaining which there is no desire for anything else.

In a small measure we enjoy this in deep sleep. Why? Because we then shed all external desires. Still, on waking up in the morning we say 'I slept well, I knew nothing!' Thus at the time of sleep we have no conscious enjoyment. If we could sleep with consciousness, then it could be pure joy. That is liberation, for then the external world ceases to be and the liberated soul is in a state of self-enjoyment. Anything else only leads to pain in the end. Something is sweet, but only for the moment. A person who likes sweet payasa rejects it when he is ill! An external object does not give pleasure or displeasure for all time. But one's soul is a permanent source of joy. Even under stress and strain, one longs to live. Even a suicide is motivated by the desire to free one's self of suffering in the hope of greater happiness. He is deluded, of course. It is thus necessary to realise *that* one thing which is always dear unto all persons. Till then one can never obtain real happiness.

This realisation is not easy. A person may not know much about music, but he can still listen to music and enjoy it. Not so in this case. Here one needs the preliminary qualifications even for a deep enquiry into the nature of the self, such as Viveka or discrimination, Vairagya or renunciation, Adhyayana or study, Dana or generosity, Yagna or meditation (यज्ञानां जप-यज्ञोस्मि Gita 10-25) tapas or austere contemplation, Vrata or ceremonial discipline.

# EASTERN MYSTICISM AND MODERN SCIENCE\*

*By*

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Modern Science with its brilliant technological achievements has won the admiration of a large section of mankind. But very few—even among the discerning few—take the trouble of going to its very foundations and attempt an understanding of its approach, philosophy or scope. A similar thing may be said about mysticism particularly Eastern mysticism as typified in the Hindu and Buddhistic approaches to reality. Again it is given to very few to discover a close parallelism between Eastern Mysticism and modern science and to assert that the two are not contradictory but complementary in their respective world views. Their respective fields of enquiry and search are the internal and external nature as Swami Vivekananda put it. The main instrument used in both types of searches is the mind. An intellectual understanding at least of the two approaches gives us a world view which is organic and not fragmented and enables us to find the purpose of life.

Recently there has been one such remarkable attempt by a scientist who can not only speak with authority on modern Physics but with equal felicity give us an insight into mystic approaches.

The present essay is an appreciation—not a critical review—of the book ‘The Tao of Physics’ by Fritjof Capra, published by Shambhala Publications, Berkeley. The sub-title of the book in the words of the author is, ‘An exploration of the parallels between Modern Physics and Eastern Mysticism’. According to the blurb, Dr. Capra is a research physicist and has worked at several noted Universities and research centres and has lectured extensively about the relations between modern physics and Eastern mysticism to general student audiences in England and the United States.

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\* The author reviews the book ‘The Tao of Physics’ by Fritjof Capra, Published by Shambhala Publications, Berkeley.



The subject is too profound for a short critical review. The language used by the author in dealing with such an abstruse and advanced thought is refreshingly simple, crisp, clear and direct. In this essay the same language of the author is used by and large to maintain its precision of expression.

In his preface to the book the author describes a beautiful experience he had where “sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling in and feeling the rhythm of my breathing when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic cosmic dance”. Being a physicist the author was aware of the fact that everything in this world was subject to a constant vigorous motion of its atoms and molecules. There is an interaction among various particles which creates some new particles in the process and destroys some. He was also familiar with the fact that high energy particles known as ‘cosmic rays’ continuously bombarded the Earth’s atmosphere. But hitherto he had experienced all these through “graphs, diagrams and mathematical theories”. Now he ‘saw’ cascades of energy coming down from outer space in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses. “I ‘saw’ the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in this cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and ‘heard’ its sound and at the moment I knew that this was the Dance of Siva, the Lord of Dancers worshipped by the Hindus.....It was followed by many similar experiences which helped me gradually to realise that a consistent view of the world is beginning to emerge from modern physics which is harmonious with ancient Eastern wisdom”. It is this realisation that is elaborated in this book of eighteen chapters. The author concludes in the end about the cosmic dance. “The metaphor of the cosmic dance thus unifies ancient mythology, religious art and modern physics. It is indeed as Coomaraswamy has said, ‘poetry, but none the less science’”.

The author states how modern physics is the basis of all natural science and how it has not merely changed the life on earth but has even influenced the political structure of the world through its application in atomic weaponry. “What is most striking is that it extends to the realm of thought and culture

where it has led to a deep revision in man's conception of the universe and his relation to it. Concepts of matter in classical physics, concepts of space time, or cause and effect have suffered a radical change in modern physics or sub-atomic physics''. In effect our world view has begun to change. These changes in fundamental concepts of classical physics have been brought about by two theories of modern physics—quantum theory and relativity theory.

Tracing the development of science the author states how the Aristotelian model of the Universe which was mostly speculative and was supported by the Christian Church throughout the middle ages gave place to the experimental science and mathematical expression of ideas of Galileo and ultimately to the mechanistic Newtonian model of the universe. The Cartesian division of nature as mind and matter combined with the mechanistic world view have helped the development of classical physics and technology. Curiously modern physics also develops from this but overcomes the 'fragmented world view' introduced by the former and 'leads us back to the idea of unity expressed in Eastern Philosophies and mysticism'.

The next chapter of the book titled 'Knowing and Seeing' goes to the root of the problem of acquiring knowledge. Abstract thought could be expressed in linear symbols of words reducing the things only to their general outlines. This is the function of language. But conceptual knowledge is insufficient to express reality. In the words of Werner Heisenberg "that every word or concept, clear as it may seem to be has a limited range of its applicability" or in the words of the semanticist Alfred Korzybski 'The map is not the territory'.

Absolute knowledge i.e., knowledge of Brahman of the Upanishads which is supersensuous "does not rely on the discriminations, abstractions and classifications of the intellect which as we have seen, are always relative and approximate". It is beyond the realms of the senses, and of the intellect from which our words and concepts are derived. The Upanishads say, 'There the eye goes not, speech goes not, nor the mind, we know not, we understand not, how one would teach it'. Absolute knowledge is thus an entirely non-intellectual experience of



reality, an experience arising in a non-ordinary state of consciousness which may be called a 'meditative' or 'mystical' state. That such a state exists has not only been testified by numerous mystics in the East and West but is also indicated by psychological research. In the words of William James; "our normal waking consciousness, rational consciousness as we call it, is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it parted from it by the filmiest of screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different."

Science on the other hand, continues the author, aims for clear definitions and unambiguous connections and "therefore it abstracts language further by limiting the meaning of its words and by its standardising its structure in accordance with the rules of logic". "The ultimate abstraction takes place in mathematics where words are replaced by symbols and where the operations of connecting the symbols are rigorously defined. The scientific method of abstraction is very efficient and powerful but we have to pay a price for it. As we define our system of concepts more precisely, as we streamline it and make the connections more and more rigorous, it becomes increasingly detached from the real world. The difference between the mathematical models and verbal models is, the former are rigorous and consistent as far as their internal structure is concerned but their symbols are not directly related to an experience. The verbal models on the other hand use concepts which can be understood intuitively but are always inaccurate and ambiguous. They are in this respect not different from philosophical models of reality and thus the two can very well be compared".

Coming to mysticism the author observes if there is an intuitive element in science there is a rational element in Eastern mysticism. The Vedanta and Madhyamika schools of philosophy for example are highly intellectual schools. The rational element here is used to interpret the direct mystical experience. All knowledge is firmly based on this experience thus giving the Eastern traditions "a strong empirical character that is always emphasized by its proponents".

In trying to draw parallels between scientific method and mystical approach the author states that the "firm basis of

knowledge on experience in Eastern mysticism suggests a parallel to the firm basis of scientific knowledge on experiment. This parallel is further enforced by the nature of the mystical experience. It is described in the Eastern traditions as a direct insight which lies outside the realm of the intellect and is obtained by watching rather than thinking by looking inside oneself, by observation. The experimental stage in scientific research seems to correspond to the direct insight of the Eastern mystic and the scientific models and theories correspond to the various ways in which this insight is interpreted. *The repeatability of the experience is in fact essential to every mystical training just as it is in scientific training*". (Italics ours)

"A mystical experience therefore is not any more unique than a modern experiment in physics, on the other hand, it is not less sophisticated either, although its sophistication is of a very different kind." "The complexity and efficiency of the physicist's technical apparatus is matched, if not surpassed, by that of the mystic's consciousness—both physical and spiritual—in deep meditation." The scientist and the mystic then have developed highly sophisticated methods of observing nature which are inaccessible to the lay person.

Now another point of comparison between science and mysticism in so far as limitations of a particular model are concerned. it is a basic realisation of modern scientific research that all models or theories are approximate. In the words of Einstein: "As far as the laws of mathematics refer to reality, they are not certain and as far as they are certain they do not refer to reality".

To take an example, in Newton's classical mechanics model the effects of air resistance or friction are not generally taken into account because they are usually very small. "But apart from such omissions Newtonian mechanics was for a long time considered to be the final theory for the description of all natural phenomena, until electric and magnetic phenomena, which had no place in Newton's theory were discovered. The discovery of these phenomena showed that the model was incomplete, that it could be applied only to a limited group of phenomena, essentially the motion of solid bodies". "Today we know that



the Newtonian model is valid only for objects consisting of large numbers of atoms, and only for velocities which are small compared to the speed of light. When the first condition is not given, classical mechanics has to be replaced by quantum theory; when the second condition is not satisfied relativity theory has to be applied". It is good to know that all these models are approximations which are valid for a certain range of phenomena. Beyond this range, they no longer give a satisfactory description of nature and new models have to be found to replace the old ones, or, better, to extend them by improving the approximation. Towards the end of the book the author takes us through successive models to the latest model in the field, the 'Boot-strap' model.

The Eastern mystics are well aware of the fact that all verbal descriptions of reality are inaccurate and incomplete. "The direct experience of reality transcends the realm of thought and language and since all mysticism is based on such a direct experience, everything that is said about it can only be partly true. In physics the approximate nature of all statements is quantified and progress is made by improving the approximations in many successive steps. How then do the Eastern traditions deal with the problem of verbal communication?"

Firstly mystics are mainly interested in experience of reality as such and not in its verbal description. But when they want to communicate they use 'myths, metaphors and symbols, poetic images and similies and allegories' as in Hinduism. "Mythical language is much less restricted by logic and common sense. It is full of magic and paradoxical situations rich in suggestive images and never precise, and can thus convey the way in which mystics experience reality much better than factual language". According to Ananda Coomaraswamy, quotes the author, "myth embodies the nearest approach to absolute truth that can be stated in words". The mythical gods and goddesses are not meant to make the stories more attractive but are essential vehicles to convey the doctrines of a philosophy rooted in mystical experience.

We are aware of some of the puzzles, and contradictions that the world presents us. In advaita vedanta this is simply

referred to as due to Maya which is indeterminate. It is interesting to know that this indeterminacy of the reality of the phenomenal world that philosophers speak of extends even to the realm of modern science. In the chapter titled 'Beyond Language' some paradoxes of modern science are described.

For illustrating an illogical situation in modern physics we may take the example of dual nature of light—more generally of electro-magnetic radiation. Interference phenomenon where the brightness at a point which received light from two sources is not the sum of the two brightnesses at the point but it may be more or less, forces us to conclude that light consists of waves. On the other hand the photo-electric effect of the same light shows that it consists of moving particles. So the paradox of electro-magnetic radiation is that it could simultaneously consist of particles which could be confined to a very small volume and of waves which spread out over a large area of space. "Neither language nor imagination could deal with this kind of reality very well".

In this connection we can speak of the unification of opposite concepts in modern physics such as: particles are both destructible and indestructible, matter is both continuous and discontinuous, force and matter are but different aspects of the same phenomenon. More startling than all these is the fact that in atomic physics we cannot speak of existence or non-existence of particles. In the words of Robert Oppenheimer, "If we ask for instance, whether the position of the electron remains the same, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron's position changes with time, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether the electron is at rest, we must say 'no'; if we ask whether it is in motion we must say 'no'".

"Quantum theory demolished the classical concepts of solid objects and of strictly deterministic laws of nature. At the sub-atomic level, the solid material objects of classical physics dissolve into wave-like patterns of probabilities, and these patterns ultimately do not represent probabilities of things but rather probabilities of inter-connections.....Quantum theory thus reveals a basic oneness of the universe. It shows that we cannot decompose the world into independently existing smallest



units''. Another startling revelation is that there cannot be any objectivity as such. "The human observer constitutes the final link in the chain of observational processes, and the properties of any atomic object can only be understood in terms of the object's interaction with the observer.....The Cartesian partition between the I and the world, between the observer and the observed cannot be made when dealing with atomic matter''.

To conclude this discussion, "In modern physics the universe is thus experienced as a dynamic inseparable whole which always includes the observer in an essential way. In this experience the traditional concepts of space and time, of isolated objects, and of cause and effect, lose their meaning. Such an experience however is very similar to that of the Eastern mystics. The similarity becomes apparent in quantum and relativity theories, and becomes even stronger in the 'quantum-relativistic' models of sub-atomic physics where both these theories combine to produce the most striking parallels to Eastern mysticism''.

In the next five chapters, the author gives a brief description of the salient features of the Eastern mystic schools of Hinduism, Buddhism, Chinese thought, Taoism and Zen, bringing out parallels with the advanced ideas of modern physics.

In the chapter on the unity of all things the author develops the theme of the "awareness of the unity and mutual interrelation of all things and events, the experience of all phenomena in the world as manifestations of a basic oneness''. This idea is best brought out in the quotations given below:

Atomic physicists say: An elementary particle is not an independently existing unanalysable entity. It is in essence a set of relationships that reach outward to other things.

"The world thus appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap or combine and thereby determine the texture of the whole."

The author is fully aware of the fact that similarity between the mystic world view and the scientific world view is not total "like Einstein, the Eastern mystics consider this underlying entity as the only reality: all its phenomenal manifestations are seen as transitory and illusory. This reality of the Eastern

mystic cannot be identified with the quantum field of the physicist because it is seen as the essence of *all* phenomena in this world and consequently is beyond all concepts and ideas. The quantum field on the other hand, is a well-defined concept which only accounts for some of the physical phenomena. Nevertheless, the intuition behind the physicist's interpretation of the sub-atomic world in terms of the quantum field, is closely paralleled by that of the Eastern mystic who interprets his or her experience of the world in terms of an ultimate underlying reality.....The Brahman of the Hindus, like the Dharmakaya of the Buddhists and the Tao of the Taoists can be seen perhaps as the ultimate unified field from which spring not only the phenomena studied in physics but all other phenomena as well”.

Coming to the question of consciousness it may be interesting to know what scientists think. “In modern physics the question of consciousness has arisen in connection with the observation of atomic phenomena.....Weigner and other physicists have argued, however, that the explicit inclusion of human consciousness may be an essential aspect of future theories of matter”.

The author concludes in the epilogue ; “Science does not need mysticism and mysticism does not need science ; but man needs both. Mystical experience is necessary to understand the deepest nature of things, and science is essential for modern life. What we need, therefore, is not a synthesis but a dynamic interplay between mystical intuition and scientific analysis”.

The author in this analysis has pressed even the latest researches in modern physics into drawing parallels with mysticism wherever possible. The book has a number of excellent photographs and diagrams illustrating the theme. Technical details have been expressed in simple language. Anyone with some simple knowledge of science and mysticism will be able to enjoy the reading. It is a remarkable book worth reading more than once—every page of it.

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# *Byways of Wisdom*

## YAKSHA PRASHNA

The Pandavas were residing in the forest having lost all that they had, in gambling. Twelve years thus elapsed. In that forest a Brahmin was heard crying that a deer was running away with the stick with which he ignited his fire for his daily sacrifice. The Pandavas heard this cry. The fact of the matter was that while the deer was scratching its horns on a tree, this stick got entangled in and it ran away out of fear. The Brahmin requested Dharmaputra to get back the stick for him. The brothers chased the deer and came away a long distance. They were tired and thirsty. They rested for a while, under a banian tree. Dharmaputra asked the brothers to fetch some water to drink. Nakula, the youngest brother, climbed on the banian tree and saw a lake at a distance. He repaired to the spot, and as he was about to drink the water, a voice was heard. It said : “ Stop, this lake belongs to me. If you want to drink its water, you must answer all my questions ”. But Nakula did not care for those words. He drank the water and fell down unconscious. Similar fate overtook the other three brothers, Sahadeva, Arjuna and Bheema.

Not seeing his brothers, Dharmaputra became worried. Following their foot-steps, he also repaired to the shore of the lake. Seeing his brothers, he was greatly agitated and when he was about to step into the lake, he heard the following words : “ I am a heron and I live by consuming the algae and the fish in the lake. I am responsible for the unconsciousness of your brothers. Kindly answer my questions before you drink the water. Otherwise you will also die ”.

Hearing this, Dharmaputra said : “ Oh Heron, you cannot be an ordinary bird. Who are you, capable of killing my powerful brothers ? ”

Hearing this, the heron transformed itself into a frightening Yaksha with a huge body and a tall figure, and said : “ Do not be falsely determined, answer my questions ”. To which, Dharmaputra replied “ Oh Yaksha, do not praise yourself

unduly. Ask your questions early, I shall answer them to the best of my ability.”

Then followed a series of questions which covered the entire field of the four purusarthas or goals of life as enjoined by the Hindu Sastras.

1. Who makes the Sun rise ?

किंखिदादित्यमुन्नयति ?

Brahman makes the sun rise.

ब्रह्माऽऽदित्यमुन्नयति ।

2. Who go round his two sides ?

के च तस्याभितश्चराः ?

The Celestials (Devas) go along his two sides.

देवाः तस्य अभितः चराः ।

3. Who makes him to set ?

कश्च एनमस्तं नयति ?

Dharma makes him to set.

धर्मश्चास्तं नयति ।

4. In what is it installed ?

कस्मिंश्च प्रतितिष्ठति ?

It is installed in truth.

सत्ये च प्रतितिष्ठति ।

These questions and answers are interpreted symbolically by scholars. Brahman here is said to be a reference to the Vedas and Āditya to the Jeeva. Since the embodied being comprehends sounds etc. through ear and other organs (आदत्ते) He is called Āditya. The Veda shows that the Jeeva is different from the body and other organs. The Dēvas referred to in the second question are Kshama and Dama and other qualities which are prerequisites for knowing the Ātma. The setting referred to in the third question that is the word Astha refers to one's own abode. These refer to the essential qualities such as being

without sin

without old age



without grief  
 without death  
 without hunger  
 without thirst  
 ability to fulfil one's wish  
 ability to achieve what is desired.

These eight qualities are inherent in the inner soul. To that place Dharma through actions and penance takes the Jeeva either directly or gradually. Ultimately, the Jeeva, through these various modes gets installed in itself that is in its own glory.

These four questions show that an embodied soul through a study of Vedas attains the knowledge. Thereafter through the practice of various penances and disciplines realises that he is not the body or its appurtenances but different. Then he reaches the celestial abode which is that of the attributed Brahma and ultimately realises himself as Brahman and rests in his own glory.

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#### A DOUBT ABOUT 'PAVARGA'

पार्वती फणि बालेन्दु भस्म मन्दाकिनीयुता ।  
 अपवर्गप्रदा मूर्तिः कथं स्यात्तव शंकर ॥

You have **Parvati**, **Phani** (Serpent on his body) **Balendu** (young moon on his crest) **Bhasma** (sacred ash on his body) **Mandakini** (Ganges on his head). With all these in the letters "PA" series, how can you give "Apavarga" (something other than 'Pa'—which is a play on the words because Apavarga means salvation).

# VALMIKI'S PRESENTATION OF MANTHARA, KAIKEYI AND RAVANA

Vimarsananda

त्यक्त्वा सुदुस्त्यजसुरेप्सितराज्यलक्ष्मीं  
धर्मिष्ठ आर्यवचसा यदगादरण्यम् ।  
मायामृगं दयितयेप्सितमन्वधावत्  
वन्दे महापुरुष ते चरणारविन्दम् ॥ भाग. ११-५-३४

The point of view that I desire to present here is not unfamiliar to serious students of the Ramayana but it is often either ignored or under-emphasised by the traditional narrators of the story. There are no bad characters in this great epic. No one has committed a wrong act knowing it to be wrong and wilfully. Indeed, one may go further and say that no one has perpetrated an act which will stand condemned in all circumstances. It is my aim to illustrate this thesis from a consideration of three characters which usually invite the disapproval, scorn and anger of the audience or reader : namely, Manthara, Kaikeyi and Ravana.

The episode of Manthara influencing Kaikeyi to ask Dasaratha for the fulfilment of the two boons which he had granted to her, and Kaikeyi herself asking for the coronation of her son Bharata and a 14-year exile for Rama in fulfillment of the two boons, is the major turning point in the story. From a religious or mythological point of view, there is a cosmic justification in the characters concerned being mere instruments acting towards the consummation of a Divine purpose. This is the view which dominates the minds of the great commentators like Govindaraja, who begins his commentary on the seventh canto of the Ayodhya-kanda with the words

अथ रावणवधकाङ्क्षिभिर्देवैराविष्टमन्थरावाक्यात् रामाभिषेकविघ्नः  
प्रतिपाद्यते ॥

Making, however, a literary appraisal of the situation and endowing the characters with a degree of free will actuated by one or more of the motives that impel human beings to action, one is inclined to consider the conduct of Manthara as normal,



as containing a ring of literary variety in a maid towards her mistress. Govindaraja displays his prejudice against this character by interpreting the word

ज्ञाति दासी as अविज्ञात देश माता पितृका ।

one who knows neither father nor mother nor country, which is exaggerated and not meaningful. On learning that Rama is to be installed as heir-apparent to the throne, Manthara's immediate reaction is that it would hurt the well-being of her mistress in the future. Her first words to Kaikeyi are

“अनिष्टे सुभगाकारे सौभाग्येन विकथ्यसे ।

चलं हि तव सौभाग्यं नद्याः स्रोत इवोष्णगे । अयो. ७-१५

This anxiety for her mistress is emphasised further by her words

तव दुःखेन कैकेयी मम दुःखं महद्भवेत् । अयो. ७-२२

where anxiety about herself is added.

She further emphasises her point of view by requesting Kaikeyi to protect herself, her son Bharata and her servant Manthara.

त्रायस्व पुत्रमात्मानं मां च विस्मयदर्शने । अयो. ७-३०

This completes the picture of the three persons certain to be affected. Kaikeyi's immediate reaction to the information is one of great joy which she demonstrates by presenting Manthara with an ornament, and by making the famous statement that in her mind there is no distinction between Rama and her son Bharata.

रामे वा भरते वाऽहं विशेषं नोपलक्षये । अयो. ७-३५

Incidentally, it is strange that Kaikeyi was ignorant of Rama's impending coronation which was known all over the city and preparations for which were so elaborate that it could not have escaped the attention of anyone but the blind and the deaf. There is an artistic insufficiency here. To this the answer could well be that that was how it really happened, and that the sage to whom was vouchsafed a mental picture of the events made only a faithful recording.

प्रकाशं यदि वा रहः तच्चाप्यविदितं सर्वं विदितं ते भविष्यति ।

बाल. २-३५

This explanation is spiritually passable, but dramatically unconvincing.

The next stage of the drama consists of a presentation of Kaikeyi's inherent impartiality and the way in which the intelligent maid disturbs her equipoise and sows the seeds of doubt and danger in her mind. In doing so, she first appeals to the instinct of mother-hood which is the universal gift bestowed on every woman. One may recall here the words of the great Acharya in his अपराधक्षम स्तोत्र

कुपुत्रो जायेत कचिदपि कुमाता न भवति ।

It is possible to conceive of a bad son but there is no such thing in the world as a bad mother. It is to this mother love, which is one of fulfillment through sacrifice and in which one's happiness is derived from the happiness of one's offspring that Manthara appeals straightaway.

पुत्रश्च तव रामस्य प्रेष्य भावं गमिष्यति । अयो. ८-११

But Kaikeyi does not accept this reasoning. She continues to be convinced that Rama will look after kith and kin like a fond parent. She says

भ्रातृन् मृत्यांश्च दीर्घायुः पितृवत्पालयिष्यति । अयो. ८-१५

She adds that Bharata will succeed Rama to the throne. It is at this point that the poet introduces the dramatic change in Kaikeyi's attitude. Manthara seizes upon the flaw in Kaikeyi's reasoning. Rama's son will succeed him, not his brother. She says

भविता राघवो राजा राघवस्यानु यः सुतः ।

राजवंशात्तु कैकेयि भरतः परिहास्यते ॥ अयो. ८-२२

Then she proceeds to elaborate on the calamities that will befall Bharata—loneliness, helplessness, exile, even death. Rather than court such a fate, it seems to her safer for Bharata to voluntarily exile himself into the woods. Further, it would hurt Bharata's proud up-bringing to live alongside of Rama's flourishing greatness. Rama's coronation will please the other wives who are smarting under Dasaratha's partiality for Kaikeyi. They are waiting for revenge. She concludes this battery of arguments with the words



यथा हि रामः पृथिवीमवाप्स्यति  
ध्रुवं प्रनष्टो भरतो भविष्यति । अयो. ८-३९

Manthara has performed her role. From now on Kaikeyi takes over. Kaikeyi's face is flushed with anger. She heaves with long-drawn breath. Manthara, on being questioned, suggests the *modus operandi*, which is well-known.

The point for dramatic criticism is whether the arguments advanced by Manthara were genuine or whether, knowing that no misfortune would ever befall Bharata, she was advancing a manifestly wrong cause, knowing it to be wrong? There is nothing in the circumstances to suggest that her feelings and fears were not sincere. Nor is it artistically repugnant to acquiesce in the possibility of such an attitude.

There is a final episode about Manthara which could well have been avoided or toned down by the great poet. In the 78th canto of the Ayodhyakanda and after Dasaratha's cremation, Sathrugna sees Manthara emerging in all her bejewelled glory, looking like a monkey on a lead :

रज्जुबद्धेव वानरी । अयो. ७८-७

Sathrugna catches her, abuses her and drags her along the ground and her jewels are scattered on the floor.

विचकर्ष तदा कुब्जां क्रोशन्तीं धरणीतले । अयो. ७८-१६

Bharata comes to her rescue. He points out that women should not be killed and that Rama would never speak to them again if Manthara comes to grief. It is difficult to explain the conduct of Sathrugna towards this female cripple except by attributing to him an unpremeditated excess of anger which was beyond control.

## II

Amongst the characters that have been portrayed in the great literary works of the world, Kaikeyi has the distinction of having hurled at her more abuses than anyone else. Every person who comes into contact with her showers torrents of abuse on her. The foremost is Bharata, her son, who speaks from the depths of agony and despair. Next comes Dasaratha who speaks from utter helplessness. Kausalya speaks from grief and

Vasishta and Sidhartha, the sage counsellors, out of a logical displeasure. Sumanthra speaks from loyalty. The poet adds his own contribution, which is considerable. Some of the adjectives used to characterise her are revealing.

१. मन्थरावाक्यमोहिता । अयो. १०-३
२. स्वार्थलिप्सुं अपण्डिताम् । अयो. १०-१९
३. अनर्थस्था, असिद्धार्था अभीता भयदर्शिनी । अयो. १३-२
४. पापसमाचरा । अयो. १४-२०
५. सुनिर्लज्जा । अयो. १८-१९
६. अनार्या । अयो. १८-३१
७. पतिघ्नी । अयो. ३५-६
८. मुक्तलज्जा । अयो. ३६-१३
९. निरपत्रपा । अयो. ३७-५
१०. अतिप्रवृत्ता, दुर्मेधा, कुलपांसिनी । अयो. ३७-२२
११. अर्थपरा, त्यक्तधर्मा । अयो. ४२-७

In contrast to Rama's

नाहमर्थपरो देवी and केवलं धर्ममास्थितम् । अयो. १७-२०  
आत्मकामा सदा चण्डी क्रोधना प्राज्ञमानिनी ।

by Bharata in Ay. 70-10, to the messengers who have come to take him to Ayodhya. And the poet's final verdict

मूढा पण्डितमानिनी ।

Before discussing the part played by Kaikeyi, it is necessary to invite attention to a relevant incident which is packed away in a corner as it were, and not brought into the limelight. In asking Rama to accept the crown, Dasaratha underlines the need for expedition, and draws pointed attention to the possibility of Bharata's hostility. Dasaratha has had bad dreams. The astrologers have predicted difficult times. Under such conditions Kings lose their lives or fall into great danger. So he feels that the coronation of Rama should be performed the very next day, when Bharata is away in another place. Bharata is endowed with good qualities, but even the great do not rejoice at the good fortune of others! Obviously Dasaratha is fully aware of the promise that he has given to Kaikeyi's father at the time of his



marriage to her that her son would be crowned as king of Kosala. This is referred to later by Sri Rama when he meets Bharata in the forest. In the 107th canto of the Ayodhyakanda, after listening to Bharata's persuasive pleading requesting him to return to Ayodhya, Rama refers to this promise.

पुरा भ्रातः पिता नः स मातरं ते समुद्रहन् ।

मातामहे समाश्रौषीद्राज्यशुल्कमनुत्तमम् ॥

With all his ingenuity, Govindaraja is unable to discover a satisfactory extenuation for Dasaratha. He discusses this point and asks himself the question why Kaikeyi does not remind the king of this earlier promise and replies to himself that since the incident took place when Kaikeyi was very young, she might have forgotten about it. Indeed, he proceeds further and supports this argument of Kaikeyi's forgetfulness by pointing out that even in respect of the two boons, Manthara had to draw her attention to them. So far as Dasaratha himself is concerned, Govindaraja takes refuge in a common saying that lies uttered during marriage, danger to life and property or for the sake of saving a Brahmin do not come under the category of sins.

उद्वाहकाले रतिसंप्रयोगे प्राणालये सर्वधनापहारे ।

विप्रस्य चार्थेऽप्यनृतं वदेयुः पञ्चानृतान्यादुरपातकानि ॥

There is, however, another aspect of the matter. It is not clear when and how Rama came to know of this promise made by his father. It is possible to assume that even when the preparations for his coronation were proceeding he knew by divine insight that they would be infructuous and that he would anyhow be exiled to the forest. This would be more in keeping with Rama's character than to suggest, as certain commentators have done, that this secret promise was revealed to him by Sumantra, the minister's charioteer. In any event, this makes Rama's fulfilment of his father's promise to Kaikeyi all the more compelling, although on a different footing. What is difficult to understand, however, is the almost deliberate silence of all the other characters who should have known about it but who nevertheless probably took the point of view of the great commentator Govindaraja. That Dasaratha himself completely ignored this promise cannot be denied.

The drama of Kaikeyi is played in three scenes. The first relates to her display of anger and her extracting the two promises from Dasaratha. The second deals with her part at the time of Rama's leave-taking. The third is concerned with her interview with her son.

From the moment that Kaikeyi determines to protect the interests of her son, she becomes an animated fury, poised towards the attainment of a single purpose, and scornful of the suffering caused thereby to others. The poet introduces at this stage a scene of poignant irony. In response to Kaikeyi's presentation of anger and entreaty, the besotted emperor promises to fulfill her wishes and swears by his son Rama :

यं मुहूर्तमप्यपश्यंस्तु न जीवेयमहं ध्रुवम् ।

तेन रामेण कैकेयि शपे ते वचनक्रियाम् ॥ अयो. ११-७

It is then that Kaikeyi asks for the fulfilment of the two boons. At each stage of the dialogue, she emphasizes his duty as a king and a man to uphold truth and righteousness and keep his promise.

स राजराजो भव सत्यसङ्गरः कुलं च शीलं च हि रक्ष जन्म च ।

परत्रवासे हि वदन्त्यनुत्तमं तपोधनाः सत्यवचो हितं नृणाम् ॥ अयो. ११-३०

Indeed, she refers to satya and dharma on more than one occasion (see Ay. 12-39, 41 and 45 and Ay. 14-7, 8)

यदि दत्त्वा वरौ राजन् पुनः प्रत्यनुतप्यसे ।

धार्मिकत्वं कथं वीर पृथिव्यां कथयिष्यसि ॥

and appeals to his honour

यस्याः प्रसादे जीवामि या च मामभ्यपालयत् ।

तस्याः कृथा मया मिथ्या कैकेय्या इति वक्ष्यसि ॥

She reiterates the same point of view after once again listening with immobile unconcern to the king's long wail of despair, anger, sorrow, entreaty and helplessness. Indeed, she is surprised that the king has not appreciated the need to maintain his dharma but continues speaking harsh words to her, and finally suggests that he would send for Rama. She is the aggrieved party.



किमिदं भाषसे राजन् वाक्यमङ्ग रुजोपमम् ।

आनाययितुमक्लिष्टं पुत्रं राममिहार्हसि ॥ अयो. १४-२१

When Rama arrives, she mentions to him also that the king, having given her two boons behaves like an uneducated and common man and quite unlike an emperor.

एष मह्यं वरं दत्त्वा पुरा मामभिपूज्य च ।

स पश्चात्तप्यते राजा यथाऽन्यः प्राकृतस्तथा ॥ अयो. १८-२२

and implores Rama to help his father to maintain righteousness and truth.

एतत् कुरु नरेन्द्रस्य वचनं रघुनन्दन ।

सत्येन महता राम तारयस्व नरेश्वरम् ॥ अयो. १८-४०

Kaikeyi's conduct can be interpreted in one of two ways : either she was overwhelmed by mother love and self-interest and genuinely felt that the course of action suggested by her would alone protect her son and herself from imperilment and disaster. This is consistent with her adamant indifference to the king's pleas and her repeated requests to him not to swerve from the path of truth and righteousness. Or she was a consummate dissembler, a histrionic hypocrite who used every opportunity to increase her advantage. *Ex facia*, the former interpretation appears to be justified, although the temptation to invest her with inherent wickedness is irresistible.

The next stage consists of exhibitions of sorrow by Kausalya and of anger by Lakshmana and Sumantra. It is relevant to note that Rama himself considers that Dasaratha was deceived by Kaikeyi.

कैकेय्या वञ्चितो राजा । अयो. २४-११, १२ see also अयो. ५३-७, ८

although he uses this argument only to make his mother Kausalya stay back and look after the king. It is also interesting to observe that Lakshmana's anger is directed wholly towards his father and Sumantra's anger wholly towards Kaikeyi.

The scene of the drama now shifts to Rama's taking leave of his father. An incident of dubious artistic value is introduced here. Kaikeyi gives clothing made of wood bark to Rama, Lakshmana and Sita. The persons present acquiesce in the

giving of the cloth to Rama and Lakshmana as appropriate, although they are saddened by the incident. But Sita, who earlier, had told Rama that she welcomed the trials and tribulations of life in the forest and would even walk in front of him and soften the impact of weeds and thorns on his feet

अग्रतस्ते गमिष्यामि मृदन्ती कुशकण्टकान् । अयो. २७-६

now displays sudden fright at the idea of having to wear a garment made of bark. She weeps and turns to her husband, who then winds the bark over the silken garments which she is wearing. This sets off tranquil sages like Vasishta and Siddhartha into a spate of anger. It is difficult to understand Sita's unwillingness to wear the bark in view of her earlier heroism and her manifest desire to share the sufferings of her husband. At the time of final leave-taking, she is also made to wear all her jewellery, which is, of course, necessary for the story. These jewels form the means of tracing the route taken by Ravana.

The third scene of the drama relates to the interview between Bharata and his mother. It is interesting to observe that the poet paves the way for Bharata's severe chastisement of his mother by making him already aware of her difficult and selfish nature. When the messengers meet Bharata and request him to return to Ayodhya he asks after the health of his father, mothers and brothers. In referring to his own mother he says

आत्मकामा सदा चण्डी क्रोधना प्राज्ञमानिनी ।

अरोगा चापि मे माता कैकेयी किमुवाच ह ॥ अयो. ७०-१०

The messengers give him an evasive and general answer by saying that all those are well about whom he has enquired.

कुशलास्ते नरव्याघ्र येषां कुशलमिच्छसि । अयो. ७०-१२

Govindaraja condones this statement on the ground that it is सामान्योक्तिः ।

Kaikeyi exhibits undisguised happiness on seeing her son.

अनुप्राप्तं तु तं दृष्ट्वा कैकेयी प्रोषितं सुतम् ।

उत्पपात तदा हृष्टा त्यक्त्वा सौवर्णमासनम् ॥ अयो. ७२-२

After breaking the news of his father's death in a straightforward manner including the information that Dasaratha died with the name of Rama on his lips



रामेति राजा विलपन् हा सीते लक्ष्मणेति च ।

स महात्मा परं लोकं गतो गतिमतां वरः ॥ अयो. ७२-३६

she then proceeds to narrate the incidents leading to Rama's departure to the forest. During all this time she is obviously unconscious that she has done anything wrong. Indeed, the poet uses the phrase

विप्रियं प्रियशङ्कया, अयो. ७२-४१

which is interpreted by Govindaraja as

विप्रियं रामविवासनप्रतिपादकम् । प्रियशङ्कया एतच्छ्रवणेन भरतस्य प्रियं भवतीति वितर्केण ।

and concludes significantly that she was just a fool who considered himself to be wise.

मूढा पण्डितमानिनी । अयो. ७२-४७

The last remark of Valmiki is about the worst that could be said about Kaikeyi's conduct and it is abundantly clear that that was the opinion of Valmiki himself. Her final remark to Bharata is that she had done what she had only for his sake.

त्वत्कृते हि मया सर्वमिदमेवंविधं कृतम् ॥ अयो. ७२-५२

The character of Ravana is such an inextricable mixture of good and evil, reason and passion, courage and cunning, that critics have alternated between admiration and anger in dealing with him. He is the most complicated of the characters portrayed by Valmiki. That he is cast in a super-human and heroic mould is universally accepted. Says Vibhishana—

“ असौ किरीटी चलकुण्डलास्यः

नगेन्द्रविन्ध्योपमभीमकायः ।

महेन्द्रवैवस्वतदर्पहन्ता

रक्षोधिपः सूर्य इवावभाति ॥ यु. ५९-२४

Says Sri Rama—

आदित्य इव दुष्प्रेक्षो रश्मिभिर्भाति रावणः ।

सुव्यक्तं लक्षये ह्यस्य रूपं तेजस्समावृतम् ॥ यु. ५९-२६

He was magnificent even in repose :—

माषराशि प्रतीकाशं निश्चसन्तं भुजङ्गवत् ।

गांगे महति तोयान्ते प्रसुप्तमिव कुञ्जरम् ॥ सु. १०-२८

There is an element of Shakespearian tragedy, however, in the characterisation and conduct of Ravana. The heroic characters of Shakespearian tragedy are men of great qualities, but each of them is the victim of one weakness which leads to his downfall and death. Hamlet is weak and vacillating ; Macbeth is consumed by ambition ; Lear is blinded by parental love ; Othello is unreasonably jealous. Shakespeare brings out this concept of tragedy in Hamlet :

“ So oft it chances in particular men  
That, for some vicious mole of nature in them,  
As in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,  
Since nature cannot choose his origin—  
By the o’ergrowth of some complexion,  
Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason ;  
Or by some habit that too much o’er-leavens  
The form of plausible manners ; that these men,  
Carrying, I say, *the stamp of one defect*,  
Being nature’s livery or fortune’s star—  
Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,  
As infinite as man may undergo—  
Shall in the general censure *take corruption*  
*From that particular fault.* ”

Thus with Ravana, his abduction of Sita and his determination to make her his consort at any cost shattered his greatness and hurled him towards ignominious death. Says Hanuman, who is attracted by Ravana’s effulgent splendour (तेजसा तस्य मोहितः)

अहो रूपमहो धैर्यमहोत्सवमहो द्युतिः ।

अहो राक्षसराजस्य सर्वलक्षणयुक्तता ॥

यद्यधर्मो न बलवान् स्यादयं राक्षसेश्वरः ।

स्यादयं सुरलोकस्य स शक्रस्यापि रक्षिता ॥

In this view, Ravana is not cast by the poet in the part of a villain, but he is a tragic hero in the Shakespearian sense, the victim, not of external circumstances, but of his own solitary



weakness, which makes him the recipient of a relentless retribution.

There is a point of literary relevance to be considered in regard to Ravana, as has been done for Kaikeyi and Manthara. Ravana also does not appear to have been a conscious wrong doer. The standards of fair-play and morality by which he is conventionally judged are those of other cultures and not his. This is evident from a perusal of his words to Sita and an impartial examination of his conduct towards her.

Ravana's initial reaction, on learning from Akampana, of the death of his brothers and the destruction of Janasthana, is one of anger and a thirst for revenge. He says—

जनस्थानं गमिष्यामि हन्तुं रामं सलक्ष्मणम् । अर. ३१-२१

He has no thought of Sita and it is Akampana who suggests that since it is not possible to conquer Rama in war, it is better to destroy him by abducting Sita. At this stage Ravana remains strangely unmoved on hearing a description of Sita's beauty. He goes to Maricha and says that since Janasthana has been destroyed by Rama, Maricha should help him to abduct his wife.

आरक्षो मे हतस्तात रामेणाक्लिष्टकर्मणा  
जनस्थानमवध्यं तत्सर्वं युधि निपातितम्  
तस्य मे कुरु साचिव्यं तस्य भार्यापहारणे । अर. ३१-४०

Here also revenge and not abduction is Ravana's major aim. And on being dissuaded by Maricha, Ravana drops the matter and returns home to Lanka.

एवमुक्तो दशग्रीवो मारीचेन स रावणः ।  
न्यवर्तत पुरीं लङ्कां विवेश च गृहोत्तमम् ॥ अर. ३१-५०

Even after listening to Surpanaka's glowing description of Sita's beauty and her suggestion that he should make her his wife, Ravana's mind is still pre-occupied with the best means of wreaking revenge on Rama. There is no passion here, but cold reasoning.

ततः शूर्पणखा वाक्यं तच्छ्रुत्वा रोमहर्षणम् ।  
सचिवानभ्यनुज्ञाय कार्यं बुद्ध्वा जगाम सः ॥

तत्कार्यमनुगम्याथ यथावदुपलभ्य च ।

दोषाणां च गुणानां च संप्रधार्य बलाबलम् ॥ अर. ३५-१, २

This is also the view of the commentator Govindaraja.

सीता रहितेन तदुपसनिना रामेण कापि हानिः न संभाव्यते । तस्मादयमेव  
पक्षः सम्यक् इत्येवं निश्चित्य प्रावर्तत इत्यर्थः ॥

Surpanaka's advice to her brother also is that he should first kill Rama and then make Sita his wife. She uses the words—

हतनाथां सुखं सीतां यथावत् उपभोक्ष्यसि । अर. ३४-२४

What worries Ravana at this stage is the insult to his prowess that a mere mortal pedestrian should have defeated his brothers.

चतुर्दश सहस्राणि रक्षसामुग्रतेजसाम् ।

निहतानि शरैस्तीक्ष्णैः मानुषेण पदातिना ॥ अर. ३६-८

It may be said that after seeing Sita the motive of revenge comes to be mixed up in Ravana's mind with his desire to possess her. The change is made explicit by the poet. On seeing Sita for the first time, he is overcome by her great beauty and straightaway offers to make her his consort, after describing his own greatness and invulnerability.

येन वित्रासिता लोकाः सदेवासुरपन्नगाः ।

अहं तु रावणो नाम सीते रक्षोगणेश्वरः ॥

त्वां तु काञ्चनवर्णाभां दृष्ट्वा कौशेयवासिनीम् ।

रतिं स्वक्रेषु दारेषु नाधिगच्छाम्यनिन्दिते ॥ अर. ४७-२५, २६

Sita treats him with scorn and contempt, and inflames his indignation and insults his valour by comparing him with Rama. Indeed, she says that the difference between them is that between a lion and a fox, a ditch and the ocean, nectar and vinegar, gold and lead, sandal and mud, elephant and cat, eagle and crow, peacock and turkey, swan and vulture. It is not surprising that he considers that she is unaware of his matchless powers and unparalleled reputation amongst men and gods. He relates them in detail. She is unimpressed and unconcerned. He then decided to take her away.

From now on, Ravana's behaviour towards Sita never transcends the limits of propriety. He pleads with her, humbles



himself before her, makes grandiloquent promises, and in the accepted pattern of ancient and modern literature, he courts her. He says finally

नैव चाहं क्वचित् भद्रे करिष्ये तव विप्रियम् ॥ अर. ४९-१२

Later, in Lanka he pleads with her

साधु किं ते अन्यथा बुद्ध्या रोचयस्व वचो मम ।

भजस्व मा अपि तप्तस्य प्रसादं कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ अर. ५५-१८

He then humbles himself before her :

एतौ पादौ महास्निग्धौ शिरोभिः परिपीडितौ ।

प्रसादं कुरु मे क्षिप्रं वश्यो दासोऽहमस्मि ते ॥ अर. ५५-३६

And he warns the women who have been detailed to guard Sita to treat her well, or else they will forfeit their lives :

या च वक्ष्यति वैदेहीं वचनं किञ्चिदप्रियम् ।

अज्ञानात् यदि वा ज्ञानात् न तस्या जीवितं प्रियम् ॥ अर. ५४-१६

It is significant that Ravana is in no haste. He gives Sita one whole year within which to make up her mind.

In the 20th canto of the Sundarakanda Valmiki gives us a picture of Ravana, unable to sleep, visiting Sita before dawn. Here also Ravana pleads with Sita. He begs her to consider him with respect and seriousness.

कामये त्वां विशालाक्षि बहु मन्यस्व मां प्रिये । सु. २०-३

He further points out to her that he has not transgressed the laws of conduct prescribed for Rakshasas by bringing her away.

स्वधर्मो रक्षसां भीरु सर्वथैव न संशयः ।

गमनं वा परस्त्रीणां हरणं संप्रमथ्य वा ॥ सु. २०-५

But he makes haste to add, he does not touch any woman without her consent : a point reinforced by a description of the women in Ravana's harem by Hanuman.

एवं चैतदकामां तु न त्वां स्प्रक्षयामि मैथिलि ॥ सु. २०-६

Ravana's reluctance to force Sita is attributed to a curse, which he explains to one of his ministers, Mahāpārswa by name. He once forced an apsara lady called Punjikasthala. She

complained to Brahma, who then cursed Ravana that if he violated a woman without consent his head would be shattered into thousands fragments. The expression used by the poet is

बलात् नारीं गमिष्यति । यु. १३-११

which can have meaning only if it is confined to actual rape. Ravana has taken Sita by the thighs, he has made her sit on his lap, and when he fights with Jatayu, he has done the same.

वामेन सीतां पद्माक्षीं मूर्धजेषु करेण सः ।

ऊर्वोस्तु दक्षिणेनैव परिजग्राह पाणिना ॥ अर. ४९-१९.

अङ्केनोद्यम्य वैदेहीं रथमारोपयत्तदा । २२

That Ravana can do anything with impunity with a woman except sleep with her and still escape the curse sounds like a legalistic or technical exoneration or exemption clause in a composite procedure of sinning. It is also repugnant to one's traditional sense of dharma that such an escape should have been provided.

The Dharma Sāstra says

अष्टाङ्ग मैथुन प्रतिषेधः ब्रह्मचर्यं—यदुक्तं स्मरणम्, कीर्तनं, केलिः, प्रेक्षणं, गुह्यभाषणम्; सङ्कल्पोऽध्यवसाय क्रियानिर्वृतिरेव च एतन्मैथुनमष्टाङ्गं प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः ॥ —शब्दकल्पद्रुम

Indian tradition does not condone the preliminaries and condemn only the conclusion of love. That Ravana's curse should have fallen outside the circumference of his behaviour is rather strange. It is also difficult to believe that but for the curse Ravana would have forced Sita, although he may have given this explanation to Mahaparswa. Firstly, there is his impregnable ego, which has been reinforced by the willing surrender of every woman who has come into contact with him. Secondly, at every stage Ravana tries to win over Sita, with an infatuation which cannot possibly be satisfied by a forced conquest. He is obviously aware of it. Further, Ravana has already touched and handled Sita's body when he brought her to Lanka.

To the end Ravana remains confident of victory. Defeat does not enter into his mind as a possibility. After all others are dead, and he alone is left, and he is about to proceed to battle, he still says



निहतानाममाल्यानां रुद्धस्य नगरस्य च ।

दुःखमेषोऽपनेष्यामि हत्वा तौ रामलक्ष्मणौ ॥

Ravana's was a great and tempestuous life, and beyond defeating the till then undefeated, he committed no crime in war. His subjects were happy. Wherever Hanuman went in Lanka, he heard sounds of music, which was of celestial quality. The tinkle of feminine jewellery filled the air. He also heard the chant of the Vedas, mingling with Ravana's praises. Ravana evoked the devotion of his dependents and the fear of his enemies. These were the marks of a great king.

Literary criticism should be based on an appraisal of the thoughts and actions of the characters, with their knowledge and not ours. Ravana is not shown to have been aware of Rama's divinity. To him his act was one of ordinary rakshasa marriage. He could not possibly consider Rama as a foeman worthy of serious consideration. In this light, and not in the context of other mythological incidents, his actions are invested with an immorality which he was not aware of. True, he surrendered his thinking at the call of love, and like others before him, and several others since, he paid the price.

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## Book Reviews

1. *Title*—Consciousness in Advaita

*Author*—Prof. S. K. Ramachandra Rao

*Publishers*—IBH Prakashana,

Gandhinagar, Bangalore-9, for Abhinava Swamigal  
Scientific Research Academy, Madras and Bangalore

*Price*—Paper-back Rs. 25, Hard cover Rs. 35

The Sri Abhinava Vidyatheertha Swamigal Scientific Research Academy was formed as part of the 61st birth-day celebrations of His Holiness Jagadguru Abhinava Vidyatheertha Swamigal of Sringeri Sharada Peetam. It was felt that, apart from the usual celebrations consisting of religious functions and meetings to express devotion, a more permanent form should be given to the celebrations consistent with the lofty and transcendental objectives of Sanatana Dharma, the maintenance of which is the *raison-d'etre* of the great Sharada Peetam. From the time of Adi Sankara down to the present day, the Pontiffs of the Sharada Peetam have made significant contributions to the Philosophy of Advaita by personal instruction and written interpretation. Several of the authoritative texts on the subject like Sri Sureswaracharya's Naishkarmya Siddhi and the Varttikas and the numerous writings of the great Vidyaranya owe their existence to the spiritual insight and philosophical expertise of the saints who have adorned this Peetam.

But the interpretation of nature which is the cardinal characteristic of Western scientific knowledge has introduced a new methodology in all types of learning, including the rational and supra-rational realms of human experience and understanding. While during the 19th century, the so-called scientific outlook was confined to a mechanistic interpretation of an ever expanding knowledge over the physical world, more recent research seeks to probe into the workings of the human mind, which, in turn consists of an examination of the areas of normal consciousness and of the unexplored boundaries of parapsychology. The great Sankarabhagavatpada has explored this aspect of knowledge in a manner which is baffling to the layman but is a source of understanding to the psychologists. There is need, therefore, at the present time to reconcile the order of matter with the order of mind. Isolated research on such reconciliation has been attempted but no systematic exploration of these comparatively new areas of study has been undertaken.

One of the objectives of the Academy is to undertake the carrying on of systematic research and analysis of the scientific data and knowledge contained in the relevant ancient literature including the Vedas, Shastras and other ancient literature in the light of modern science with a view to determine how far our ancient knowledge and wisdom is relevant to modern life and in solving various problems facing humanity.



This aim postulates both study and experimental verification by modern methods. Prof. Rao's attempt is in this definite direction and when completed will throw considerable light on the problem of consciousness as expounded by Sankara in relation to the new research on the subject. It is a welcome addition to the literature on the subject which, far from being a fanciful and non-scientific TERRA INCOGNITA, has come into own as a subject for scientific research.

The first fascicule of the book which has just been published is divided into four parts. The first two parts give an exhaustive list of the sources available on the subject. The validity and significance of each source is briefly described. The pre-Sankara authors have, for the first time, been explored in full, especially the works of the Meemamsakas and other authors who cannot fall under any denomination which has subsequently crystallised but who are more or less inclined to the difference-cum-non-difference (Bheda-abheda). A point of particular relevance is the way in which the importance of personal character is stressed by all the authors including Sankara. This is an effective answer to Western and Western-minded scholars who are apt to harp on the absence of ethics in Indian philosophy. The fact of the matter is that ethics are taken for granted and not therefore made into an element of creed.

The discussion on post-Sankara authors is elaborate, and special mention is made of the school of Sureswara, Vachaspatimisra and Padmapada, all of whom followed Sankara carefully in postulating the importance of self-experience in the way in which awareness not only suggests the present phenomenal world but also the world of subjectivity. The fact that they chalked out a line of argument for themselves shows that they were anxious to emphasise Sankara's tenets and not to differ from him. Such is the position in regard to the exploration of phenomenal realism at the transactional level and being sublated at the transcendental level. The examples of the moon in the waters or the face in the mirror should be understood in this context.

At no stage is the principle that phenomenal presentation is entirely founded on the absolute real given up. One may accept the traditional suggestion that Mandana's *Brahmasiddhi* establishes Brahman as reality (SAT), Sureswara's *Nishkarmya Siddhi* establishes Brahman as pure consciousness (CHIT), Vimuktatman's *Ishta Siddhi* argues that Brahman is of the nature of bliss (ANANDA), and that Madhusudhana's *Advaita Siddhi*, following as the fourth, seeks to formulate Brahman as all three at once (SACCIDANANDA).

The third section deals with the principle of subjectivism in Indian thought. As the author rightly points out science and philosophy are concerned with explaining and understanding reality. Explanations involve the determination of causal relationships, while

understanding refers to the role of reality in the behaviour of individuals. The restriction of science to explanation has resulted in a near crisis in the field of science, especially in sciences dealing with human behaviour. The author points out relevantly that psychologists have with considerable success followed the methods of physics and it is in this field that the Indian mind escaped the error of objectivism. The methodology in Indian philosophy has set a counter-corrective to the principle of perception and measurement such as sense perception, inference, reasoning and verbal testimony. These sources of correct knowledge are collectively known as *pramana*. It is largely a deductive method of analysis but involves an element of intuition. Such vital aspects of knowledge as the relation between a thing as it is and the thing as perceived by which objectivity undergoes an epistemic reduction are discussed in full.

Generally, reasoning is employed in Indian philosophy but in the orthodox system it is used only to support scripture and not otherwise.

Sankara in fact is at pains to point out that reason by itself is subjected to contradiction by contrary reasoning and cannot help the ultimate procedure for the understanding or experience of veracity.

The last part of the book deals with what is called a paradigm. A paradigm is the basic requirement to guide an enquiry to direct the methods and approaches employed in it and to integrate the findings of the several workers in the same field. In other words, it is an accepted pattern of enquiry and its chief merit lies in its being shared by all the members of the scientific community. It serves as a road map for the enquirer. Vedanta has developed its own paradigms. Any scientific knowledge seeks first to identify the parameters, then determine and define the relations between them, and finally constructs a workable model, not only to understand reality but to accomplish the religious goal as well. For in India, theory is a hand-maid to Sadhana.

The paradigm adopted by Advaita Vedanta is technically styled as initial assumption and subsequent withdrawal or rejection (*Adhyaropa apavada*). In understanding this doctrine, it is necessary to realise that subsequent denial is not of the substance itself, but of the particular attribute that has been construed or projected on it. The purpose of the denial is not to assert or confirm the existence of a contrary or opposite attribute, but to lead gradually to the understanding that the substance as such is to be distinguished from the same substance as endowed with attributes. This is the purpose of the example of the rope and the snake.

This method is justified by the fact that there can be no other way of apprehending the real nature of Brahma.



At the end of each chapter the author gives an exhaustive list of the texts that he has referred and quotes extensively from each of the texts which are relevant. This adds to the value of the book especially for students who would like to pursue the study further in their own way, and there can be no doubt that this is an extremely valuable addition to the philosophy of Vedanta literature in the light of modern psychological procedures and objectives.

One looks forward to the second volume of this study which will deal with the substance of the enquiries both experimental and by arguments. Prof. Rao deserves to be congratulated for bringing out what will certainly turn out to be a permanent addition to the literature on the subject.

—S. Y. K.

2. *Meditation and Mantras*  
by Swami Vishnu Devananda  
Om Lotus Publication Co., New York, 1978

Meditation is a subject concerning which there is considerable confusion, especially among foreigners interested in Indian Yoga. Swami Vishnu Devananda has sought in this book to dispel this confusion and set the record straight. The Swami who has done much to popularise the Indian wisdom among the Western enthusiasts has achieved celebrity all over the world. And he may be relied upon to correctly interpret the Indian texts.

The present volume is in the nature of a source-book of all meditative techniques and the mystic formulae employed in the course of spiritual practice. There is a special emphasis on Japa meditation (p. 44-83), and all the technical expressions have been explained with remarkable clarity. The theoretical discussion carries conviction. The author has also given the original Sanskrit text of the more popular *mantras*, with explanations in English. While dealing with Hatha Yoga, there is a lot of modern scientific knowledge that has been utilized to bring out the significance of Indian Yoga ideas. The discussion of the role of the chakra-scheme is an illustration to the point. The Vedantic approach of Jnana Yoga has been highlighted as a path of evolution towards spiritual realization. There is to be found here a concise but clear formulation of the *nyāyas* employed as well as the significance of the *mahā-vākyas*.

While dealing with the theoretical structure of Raja Yoga, the volume contains the entire text of Patanjali's *Yoga-Sutra* along with English translation of each aphorism and copious notes on many an important point. This is a valuable part of the book. The author has sought to bring out the significant contribution of Patanjali towards crystalization of Yoga theory.

There are also general discussions concerning the meditative practices and the usual obstacles that the modern man meets with. The present day need for meditation as well as the difficulties encountered in the effective practice thereof have come in for the author's consideration. The modern reader with some claim to scientific sophistication will find the book rewarding and interesting.

There is an aspect of the book which borders on the unusual and exotic. Swami Vishnu Devananda was a disciple of the celebrated saint of Hrishikesh, Swami Sivananda. It was he in fact that sent Swami Vishnu to the West to spread the gospel of Yoga. After Swami Sivananda died in 1963, Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Centres and Ashrams were established by Swami Vishnu to honour his master's memory. In August 1976, the Master began to communicate with the Swami through several different members of the spiritual community headed by the Swami, such as Morilyan Rossner, Divyananda, Sridharananda and others. These messages from beyond the Earth Plane have been documented here with all circumstantial details and scientific corroborations. The utterances of Swami Sivananda through such supra-normal media have been collected in the section called "Master Sivananda speaks" (pp. 286-336). This section makes very interesting reading. It opens a new chapter in parapsychological research and psychical investigations.

—S. K. R.

### 3. *The Meaning of Happiness*

Author: Alan Watts

Hutchinson Publishing Groupes

Rider & Co., London, 1978

Price £ 2.95

Alan Watts is a bold investigator in the spiritual realm. He was one of the early exponents of Zen, who made the Japanese cult of tranquillity well-known in the West. Towards the close of his career, he experimented with psychedelic drugs and came to the remarkable conclusion that the Zen *Satori* could be easily achieved by chemical means. This dubious discovery discredited Alan Watt's credibility to a great extent.

The present book was first published in 1940, when the author was still engaged in his date with the Eastern Wisdom, and when the horrors of the First World War were still resounding in all their fury. The author was only 24 years old at that time, but had already become famous as the author of *The Spirit of Zen*. The Zen spirit of inactivity permeates this volume also. He points out to the excellence of Eastern thought in theoretically analysing the concept of happiness as well as practically suggesting a technique to obtain it.

The book examines the popular idea of happiness and considers many aspects of it : theoretical and practical. The author concludes



by saying "Therefore when it is said that those who search for happiness never find it perhaps the truth is that there is no need to search for it" (p. xxiv). He deals with 'the war in the soul' as the motivation of this search and demonstrates by reason and example that the religious answer to the problem is a vicious circle. He warns us against the danger of what he calls 'bewitchment' (p. 96-7). He cites the work of Jung and psychotherapy, and shows that there is a fundamental conflict between psychology and metaphysics.

While the author dismisses all attempts to secure happiness as useless and irrelevant, he points out that the 'great liberation' is not merely negative. The significance of the penultimate chapter is that the awareness of the seeker holds the key to the problem of happiness. "Those who search for happiness do not find it because they do not understand that the object of their search is the seeker" (p. 174). He rings a typical Zen note when he concludes this chapter thus :

"For our true instructors in wisdom are not the sages and their writings but the creatures of our own minds, the gods and demons of thought and feeling and their reactions to the outer world of experience. And of the demons the blackest of all is called Lucifer, the bearer of light, for he is made to show us that there is light in the darkness as well as in the light" (pp. 137-188).

The book is eminently readable, the style being racy and the contents of practical interest. The inclination of the author is in favour of the Indian view that happiness is obtained not by changing circumstances around us, but by changing ourselves. He appears to imply that the best form of happiness is contentment. *Inter alia*, there is a careful and keen examination of modern ideas of happiness as contained in psychology and psychotherapy.

—S. K. R.

## News and Notes

### **Mahashivaratri and other celebrations at Sringeri**

This year Mahasivarathri fell on Sunday 30th day of the Tamil month of Masi, Krishna Chaturdasi day i.e., 25-2-79. As usual this was celebrated with due ceremony at Sringeri. In the morning soon after the daily anusthana, His Holiness Sri Sannidhanam went in procession, accompanied by all the Srimath paraphernalia, viz., elephants, nadaswaram, Vedic chanting etc. to the Sri Malahanikareshwara temple around 10 a.m. There, he performed Mahanyasapurvaka Ekadasavara Abhisekha to Lord Malahanikareshwara. The chanting of Sri Rudram, Chamakam etc., which forms part of this Abhiseka was done by Vedic pandits of our Srimath Vidhyarthi studying Veda in Sri Sringeri Veda Patasala and a large number of devotees. The Abhiseka was conducted in a grand and impressive manner befitting the occasion.

His Holiness Sri Sri Mahasannidhanam arrived during the middle of the pooja and remained practically till the end, adding lustre to the already divine atmosphere.

It was nearly 6 p.m. when the final part of the pooja was completed. A large number of devotees including many who had come specially for this purpose from various parts of the country witnessed the pooja.

After the conclusion of the pooja, Sri Sannidhanam returned to Narasimhavanam in the customary procession with Vedic chanting, nadaswaram etc.

The first yama pooja in the night was started by Sri Sri Mahasannidhanam at about 7 p.m. Beginning with panchamruta Abhisheka, Ekadasa Rudrabhisheka was done followed by Archana and deeparadhana. It was 11 p.m. when the first yama pooja was completed.

The next three yama poojas were performed by Sri Sri Sannidhanam. It was nearly 6 a.m. when the 4th yama pooja ended. A large number of fortunate devotees sat throughout the night to witness such wonderful Abhiseka and pooja.



14th of Masi (26-2-79) was Rathotsava day. Both the Sannidhanams went to Malahanikareswara temple in the morning. After pooja there, the utsava murthis of both Malahanikareswara and Bhavani were mounted on decorated palanquins and with the Sannidhanams walking facing the palanquins it was taken in procession upto the entrance to the Srimath where a beautifully decorated Ratha was standing ready. The two idols were installed in the Ratha, accompanied by the usual ceremonies. The ratha was then drawn by a large number of devotees upto some distance in the main street where it was left. In the evening with Sri Sri Sannidhanam on a silver palanquin facing the ratha, it was drawn by hundreds of devotees raising jayagoshas for their Jagadgurus and Malahanikareswara and Bhavani.

It was about 11 p.m. when the Ratha returned to the place from which it started.

### **Inauguration of the Lalitha Sahasranama Stotra recital at Shankar Math, Bangalore on Friday, 23rd March 1979**

Smt. M. S. Sheela recited the Lalitha Sahasranama stotra set to music by Shri S. Y. Krishnaswamy. The Thousand names were sung in several ragas both Karnatak and Hindusthani and it is no exaggeration to say that the performance was an inspiring flow of melody and devotion. There was a very large audience who greatly appreciated the recitation. Blessings were received from His Holiness the Jagadguru from Sringeri and the prasadam was ceremoniously presented to the artiste by the manager of the Bangalore Math. It is proposed to bring out this musical version of the Lalitha Sahasranamam in the form of a LP gramophone record.

### **Vardhanti of Sri Bharati Tirtha Mahaswamiji on 2-4-1979 at Sringeri**

The day started with Their Holinesses giving darshan together to the assembled devotees. Sri T. Ramalingeswara Rao performed Padapooja on behalf of Telugu 'Shankara Kripa' readers. His Holiness the Sannidhanam then went in

procession to Malahanikareswara temple where he performed the pooja in the traditional style. His Holiness returned to the Pravachana Mandira at about 1-15 p.m. and made obeisance at the shrines of the illustrious Acharyas of the past. He also graced the Rudra Homa and Ayushya Homa. After Purnahuti was over, a Kanikai was offered by Dharmatma V. Vaidya Subramania Iyer.

In the evening, there was a special function during which many ardent devotees spoke about the greatness of the Sringeri Peetha and the glory of the unbroken succession of the great acharyas who occupied it. In conclusion, Their Holinesses blessed the devotees.

### **Sri Ramanavami Celebrations**

This year's Sri Ramanavami Celebrations at Sringeri were simple but very popular and attracted a large number of devotees. A variety of programmes were arranged during evenings. The most attractive of them were the violin concert of Sri Kunnakudi Vaidyanathan and his Party and Sri S. Balachandar, Veena. The Harikatha and Talamaddala were other attractive programmes. This year there was an unprecedented attraction to the public and every day the Sri Math premises were thronged with eager devotees to enjoy the programmes.

On 6-4-79, the celebrations concluded with Parayana of Sri Rama Pattabhisekam by His Holiness Sri Sri Sannidhanam. It was a divine coincidence, for that was the day of Varshikotsava of Lord Sri Balasubramanya and the devotees were treated with a feast of Poojas.

In the evening there was a procession in which Lord Rama along with His Paraphernalia was taken round the streets of Sringeri.

### **Tamil New Year's Day**

The Tamil New Year's day was celebrated in the Sringeri Sankara Math, Bangalore, on the 14th April, 1979. In the morning there were Abhisekams and archanas to Lord Sankara Bhagavatpada and Sri Sharada Devi.



In the evening, there was a public meeting over which Sri S. Y. Krishnaswamy presided. Shri K. P. Shankara Shastry read the Panchangam for the new year, and explained its significance.

Shri Srinivasa Rangachar delivered an address on the occasion emphasising the principle of Kala and its treatment in the Vedas.

The President in conclusion, pointed that while the panchagam played a significant part in our lives, its subservience to the devotion to the Divine Mother should always be borne in mind. He also said that although the Sringeri Math was established in Karnataka, the people of Tamil Nadu were great devotees of it and that therefore, Tamil New Year's day should always form an important celebration of the Math.

### **Renewal of Subscriptions**

The first year of TATTVALOKA has been completed with the 6th issue, released in February 1979. Subscribers are requested to renew their subscriptions. Those who have joined during the year, i.e., have received only later issues from the date of joining, are requested to intimate which issue they have received.

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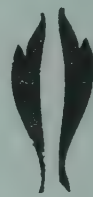
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P. B. 19 Kalamassery-683 104	Copper Sulphate Copper Oxychloride and formulations such as Fytolan, Perecloud, Oleocop, Chlorocop and Emulsicop.	Fungicide
"	Sodium Aluminate, Sulphate of Alumina Iron Free and Alumina Ferric.	Water treatment Paper Manufacture and Textile Dyeing
"	Sodium Chlorate	Bleaching
"	Potassium Chlorate	Match Manufacture
Post Bag No. 4, Kundara, Kerala State	"	"
Gonur B.O., Mettur Dam-3, Tamil Nadu	Barium Chloride, Barium Carbonate Barium Nitrate and Sodium Sulphide	Manufacture of Caustic Soda, Glass, Electroceramics Heat treatment, Salts Fire works and Leather.

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—The Project provides Technical Services at the doors of the Villagers.

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